

High-quality retransfer printing versus direct-to-card printing

Retransfer printing technology, also known as *Reverse Transfer* printing, is quickly becoming the preferred method for printing ID cards. This technology consist of a two-step process that prints the card image to a film (called retransfer film) before applying it to the card. First, the image is printed in reverse (mirror image) directly onto a clear layer of the film. Next, the imaged film is fused onto the card's surface by applying heat and pressure. The two-step retransfer process creates a superior print quality.

Let's take a closer look at the technology to understand the benefits compared to the direct-to-card printing process.



Over-the-edge printing

The two-step re-transfer process creates a true over the edge (no white space around the edge) high quality image on the card. The image printed on the film is bigger (bleed) than the card surface which allows to cover the whole surface of the card, including the edge.



Printing on technology cards

Retransfer technology can print on cards with uneven surfaces such as proximity cards, smart cards, or pre-punched cards, always with a high level of quality consistency and protecting your printhead from erosion against potential dangerous abrasive zones as the contact chip.



Superior image quality

Retransfer printing provides a much better quality image compared to direct-to-card printers due to an improved colour registration. The result are crisp, more clear images with vibrant colors, which rivals with pre-printing quality.



Printing on more card materials and more durable cards

Printing on the film (and not directly on the card surface) allows to print not only laminated PVC cards but also on other materials such as ABS, PET and polycarbonate. In addition, the retransfer film makes the card more durable and better protects the image.



Since the printhead never touches the card surface (because the system prints on the retransfer film) we can offer a lifetime warranty coverage on the printhead reducing the total cost of ownership and maintenance cost.



Real 600 dpi resolution and visual security elements (VSE) Printing on the retransfer film allows a real 600x600 dpi resolution printing for extra image quality. Thanks to this high resolution, electronic fine-line arts and other sophisticated graphical elements such as microtext can be included to increase the card security.



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