

LIFECYCLE ANALYSIS

- _ Strategy: How can design a product with minimal negative impact during all phases of its lifecycle (concept, materials, production, packaging, distribution, disassembly/disposal/renewal) with fair labor practices throughout? How accessible is the information required to make informed decisions? Do incentives exist for manufacturers to disclose their materials and processes and accommodate our standards?
- _ Relevance: Is there a need for our product? Who will use it?
- _ Capacity: Can our product compete with conventional stationery? Is it a viable alternative to existing stationery consumption? Can it be profitable while maintaining healthy relationships with the environment?
- _ Consistency: Are our practices compatible with our mission?

MATERIALS

Vintage Magazines

- _ How can we develop a sustainable system of acquiring and replenishing the vintage magazine stock? Should we buy the magazines locally (thrift shops, used bookstores, flea markets) which supports our local economy, or from a bulk warehouse located out of state? What produces less carbon emissions — driving to several local sources, driving eleven hours to a bulk warehouse, or having the magazines shipped to us?

Writing Sheets & Info Sheet

- _ What paper should we use? Virgin? Recycled? Pre-consumer recycled? Post-consumer recycled? Totally recycled fiber? Tree free? Process chlorine free? Elemental chlorine free? Totally chlorine free?
- _ Does the energy consumed in the recycling process cancel out any savings in the use of recycled paper versus virgin paper?
- _ Does 100% post-consumer recycled paper exist with the same cost-efficiency, brightness and durability as conventional sources?
- _ Does the paper manufacturer practice sustainable forestry standards? Are they certified? (Forest Stewardship Council, Abundant Forests Alliance, Rainforest Alliance)
- _ Does the paper manufacturer use renewable energy? What kind of renewable energy? Direct purchase of certified green power (wind, solar, geothermal, hydro-electric)? On-site generation (low-impact hydroelectric)? Carbon Offset Credits? Do carbon offset credits just allow polluters to purchase their way out of eco-friendly practices while claiming carbon neutrality?

Packaging

- _ How do we minimize packaging? Is it possible to design a package without glue? Which has the least environmental impact — cellophane? plastic? paper? Is the chosen material recyclable? If not, what's the biodegradability rate and possible counteractions with other landfill waste?

PRODUCTION

Pre-production

- _ What's the most ergonomic way to hand-select the magazine pages with the best imagery?
- _ How toxic is the vintage magazine ink? If using gloves to protect workers, what kind of gloves should we use — rubber, cotton? How many gloves? How recyclable are the choices?

Envelope Conversion

- _ Is there an envelope converter that is willing to work with vintage magazine stock? (5 shops refused to work with us on the assumed frailty of vintage magazine stock, and thereby the potential to jam the machines. Finally one shop agreed as long as we doubled our order.)
- _ Are any toxic chemicals used in the conversion process?
- _ Does the envelope converter use renewable energy?
- _ What is the glue used on the flap made of? Dextrose? Gum arabic? Vegetable gluten? Non-toxic? Animal-free? Grown with pesticides and/or herbicides?
- _ What is the glue used to hold the envelope together made of? Starch (corn, wheat, potato, rice)? Toxicity?

Printing (Writing Sheets & Info Sheet)

Ink

- _ Does the printer offer soy-based inks? What percentage of soy? Is the soy genetically modified? Do the crops come from an area that has been deforested for soy cultivation? Grown with pesticides and/or herbicides? Fair trade?

Press Practices

- _ Does the printer use solvents with low VOCs (volatile organic compounds) on the presses?
- _ Is the facility well-ventilated?

Platemaking

- _ Does the printer use photographic film containing silver emulsion and a toxic chemical development process? Are the film and chemicals recycled?
- _ Does the printer use direct-to-plate technology? Are the metal plates recycled?

Hazardous Waste Disposal

- _ Who disposes of the hazardous waste and how?

Optimum Sheet Use

- _ How can we prepare/size the artwork to make more efficient use of standard sheet sizes — printing two-, three-, four-up, or more? Can we combine/gang our project with the printing of another project, using unused sheet paper?

DISTRIBUTION

Packing

- _ What's the most ergonomic way to hand-pack the sets, producing the least amount of waste?

Shipping

- _ How can we develop a sustainable system that minimizes box use and avoids packing materials (peanuts, labels, tape, etc.)? What varieties of eco-friendly packing materials exist?
- _ Are 100% post-consumer recycled boxes viable?
- _ What are the environmental policies of the shipping companies, if any?

Corporate Routing Restrictions

- _ When selling to corporate retailers, how do we propose alternatives to their often environmentally destructive shipping and handling policies (bundling/packaging requirements, regulated box sizes, and transferred labor)?



Fake Forest is a research study about the 'sustainability of sustainability' and the grey areas of green thinking — complex questions of waste, cruelty, and toxicity which make it difficult for both producers and users to make informed decisions.

In 2003, fed up with how misleading, uninspiring, and ineffectual the majority of eco-friendly products and services were, founders Yvan Martinez and Joshua Trees joked about starting the 'eco-mean' alternative — informative, designed, and effective.

Martinez and Trees have lived in California (San Francisco and Los Angeles) for 13 years, an ecosystem of diverse ideologies and movements including green anarchism, technocracy, queer activism, conceptual art, community bicycle programs, open publishing, localism, and veganism, as well as a-political consumerism.

fakeforest.com



To produce something sustainably is to be confronted with complex questions of waste, cruelty, and toxicity.

This document chronicles the questions generated before, during and after Fake Forest's first experiment with sustainability: Vintage Magazine Notes, a set of recycled writing sheets and envelopes made from vintage magazines.

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