The graphic communications field (sometimes called graphic arts or simply, printing) has undergone sweeping changes in recent years with the introduction of computers and digital technology in virtually every aspect of the industry. Digital image capture and manipulation, electronic prepress operations, computer-based systems for managing most aspects of a business, computer-to-plate technology, electronic control systems on presses and bindery equipment, and many other advances have changed the fundamental ways that most printing and related operations are performed. It is probably safe to say that the industry has seen more extensive changes in the 15 years than have taken place in the five centuries since Johannes Gutenberg began printing from movable type in the mid-1400s.

Graphic Communications reflects these changes in the industry, with chapters devoted to in-depth coverage of color science, electronic prepress and digital printing, digital image capture, color management, and flexography. Other chapters provide important information on design and layout, text composition, page composition, stripping and imposition, contacting, the business aspects of printing, and careers in graphic communications have been extensively revised. Strong emphasis has been placed on safety and workplace health matters and on environmental considerations.

Information on new methods and equipment has been incorporated throughout the book, while information on processes that have become obsolete has been condensed and treated in a historical context. An extensive Glossary of Technical Terms defines and illustrates the many new words than have become part of the vocabulary of graphic communications workers in recent years. The aim is to better prepare today’s graphic communication student for a career in this rapidly evolving field.

The text is divided into 28 chapters. Each chapter begins with a set of Learning Objectives and a list of ten Important Terms. Those terms, and many others, are highlighted in boldface italic type as they occur. In addition to being explained in the chapter, the terms are also defined in the Glossary. At the end of each chapter, Review Questions are presented to help assess comprehension of the material presented.

Since “a picture is worth a thousand words,” Graphic Communications is highly illustrated. To clarify the complex processes of the industry, literally hundreds of full-color illustrations are used. Color is also used to enhance the educational value of many of the line art illustrations and to stress safety rules given throughout the text.

Graphic Communications is a valuable source of information for anyone entering any area of the printing industry today. This text will help you become well-versed in most aspects of printing technology.

Z. A. Prust, Ed.D.
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Important Safety Notice

The theory, procedures, and safety rules given in this book are typical of the industry. However, they are general and do not apply to all situations. For this reason, it is very important that you refer to the manufacturer's instructions when using any product or machine. These factory directions will give the details needed to work safely while producing quality printed products.
Graphic communications, in a relatively short period, has undergone a digital revolution. The computer and specialized software have become central to virtually every stage of the creative and production processes, from copy and image creation through prepress and press operations to bindery and finishing. (Heidelberg Prepress)