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# DYK<sup>22</sup>

DID YOU KNOW SERIES

GRAB  
THE ROPE

MAKE A SPLASH  
IN DIE CUTTING

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# DID YOU KNOW?

## 4 FAQs ABOUT SELECTING THE RIGHT DIE CUTTING METHOD FOR YOUR PROJECT

Die cutting is a valuable tool in the designer's toolbox. Using steel or metal dies in certain shapes or sizes, die cutting creates unique shapes or cutaways that can make your project more memorable and useful to the user. But die cutting is actually an umbrella term that encompasses several different variations on the process of executing cutaways that add to the creativity or functionality of your piece. The challenge is understanding the differences between the different kinds of die cutting in order to choose the method that unlocks the potential of your design.

### TRADITIONAL, LASER OR ROUTER DIE CUTTING?

**Traditional die cutting** uses a metal blade to cut edges or shapes into lighter-weight paper stocks or materials. **Laser cutting** leverages a focused beam of light to cut more complex lines or designs into higher-

quality substrates. **Router cutting** utilizes a router to create large shapes or cutaways in heavy-duty paper stocks. Each method provides unique value depending on the quantity and application of your print project.

### RESOURCES

For marketing materials from brochures to postcards, we suggest Accent® Opaque. Check out all the basis weights and finishes at [accentopaque.com](http://accentopaque.com)

Ask yourself these questions to help identify the right die cut for your project and better understand the relationship between the design and print process.

#### DOES THE STATE-OF-THE-ART TECHNOLOGY USED IN LASER CUTTING HELP SAVE ON PRINTING COSTS?



Actually, laser cutting is often *more* costly and time-intensive compared to the other kinds of die cutting in large part because of the attention and resources required of the machine for each individual cut. Whereas traditional die cutting and router cutting work on a 'cookie cutter' principle that is much more cost-effective for high-volume or multiple print runs, laser cutting is better suited for more niche or one-off projects.

#### WHICH METHOD OF DIE CUTTING IS BEST FOR LARGE FORMAT PRINTING?



Router cutting executes large shapes and cutouts in a wide variety of thick substrates found in applications like storefront signage, retail graphics and trade show displays. Router cutting is not a terribly detailed process and does not provide the same creative possibilities as laser cutting; however, it is ideal for permanent or semi-permanent signage that is simply too big for laser or traditional die cutting.

#### I'M DESIGNING A DOOR HANGER FOR A DIRECT MAIL CAMPAIGN — WHICH DIE CUTTING METHOD IS FOR ME?



For simple print pieces that you need in high volumes or that may need to be scaled based on demand, traditional die cutting is a quality, affordable solution. Plus, the growth of digital die cutting machines makes it even faster and easier to execute your desired shape or cutaway on a large scale. Other ideal applications include flyers, stickers and paper menus.

#### WHAT ABOUT SPEED? WHICH METHOD IS THE FASTEST?



This one is somewhat tricky. Depending on the complexity or sophistication of your shape, traditional die cutting may actually increase the speed-to-market of your project if a die for that shape is already formed and ready to use. However, because laser cutting does not require a die and can execute more creative cutaways, this method can be the faster of the two, depending on whether the die already exists.