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### Did You Know?

Did you know United Stationers collects consumer prices from around the country every week on key office papers?

It's true...and prices are updated every Tuesday.

See this week's price tracker at [paperrap.com](http://paperrap.com).

### Contact Our Paper Specialists

[PaperRap@ussco.com](mailto:PaperRap@ussco.com)

1-888-PAPER60

### Interested in a Topic?

E-mail our staff at [PaperRap@ussco.com](mailto:PaperRap@ussco.com) and we'll try to answer your question in our next edition of the Rap Sheet. Please place "Rap Sheet Topic" in the subject line.



## The Importance of Fine Business Stationery

The type of business stationery your customers use says a lot about who they are, or at least how they want to be perceived. From a corporate identity to a personal resume, their choice of stationery makes a statement. With a little bit of knowledge and a little effort, you can become a helpful guide for your customers, so their choice of fine business stationery matches the image they want to convey.

Why expend the extra effort? The bottom line here is, well, the bottom line. Business stationery carries a lot of margin, so selling more of it will help your profits. You should enjoy about the same amount of profit dollars selling a carton or two of fine stationery as you would from an entire pallet of copy paper. Here are a few brands of fine business stationery for you to consider.



**Neenah** – Widely recognized as a world class manufacturer of premium writing, text, cover, specialty and private watermark papers. From its cotton fiber to its unique translucent sheet, Neenah's fine papers appeal largely to designers and corporate executives alike. Neenah recently designed all new packaging for its products.

**Wausau** – Provides a broad range of fine printing and writing papers at an economical cost. Recently Wausau unveiled all new packaging of its products.

**Southworth** – Established in 1839, the family-owned Southworth Paper specializes in high quality papers and envelopes. Recently Southworth has created a brand-new sample book from which dealers and sales reps can order free samples from [PaperRap.com](http://PaperRap.com).

## Understanding Sustainability

### First of a Three Part Series on Recycling



While the symbols above are widely recognized as a commitment to saving our environment, we rarely consider the greater impact that the sales of recycled products can have on our business.

Fortunately, more and more businesses today are placing a greater value

on recycled goods as well as a recent trend referred to as **sustainability**. Sustainability is known as any development or economic growth that considers ecological and social factors as well as financial ones.

What businesses are discovering – from the largest multinational corporations to the little shop around the corner – is that sustainability and profitability work hand-in-hand. In essence, a commitment to the environment is correctly perceived as a commitment to caring. That's an image that can go a long way in building relationships with your customers.

And because paper is central to sustainability, in the next few editions of the *Rap Sheet* we will further delve into the importance of recycled goods and how they may be a profitable asset to your business.

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## Paper Brightness - "92 is the new 84"

As a result of the great changes to paper in 2005, many in the paper industry will remember last year for its significance. With the International Paper announcement of a new standard in brightness and the subsequent changes to 92 bright by all the domestic mills, we have now entered a new generation of paper making that will forever improve the quality and perceived value of commodity paper.

The real question in the distribution community is....'What does this mean to our business?' Brightness improvement actually has an initial negative impact on margins. By moving the base sheet to 92 bright, it has forever improved the quality of the most economical copier paper. This generally reduces the ability of distributors to 'up-sell' higher bright copier papers. It also reduces the gap in brightness between the lowest and highest priced Laser, Ink Jet and Color Copier sheets. We can also look for a short period of 'dumping' of the old brightness to clear out inventories.

### Impact on the Paper Industry

As demand has flattened or declined over the last several years, mills are now rationalizing equipment based on their ability to produce an economical high quality 92 bright sheet. Recent closings have been rationalizations of equipment that do not meet today's standards for quality and efficiency.

### How Does it Affect Imports?

Now that the differential between domestic and off-shore product has narrowed, more and more imports are looking at the U.S. as a less desirable destination for their product. Mondi, the largest uncoated free sheet mill in the world, has announced they will no longer ship commodity products to the U.S. and others are also seeing a less compelling financial story in this market.

### What It Means to Your Customers

Overall, the end users benefit from a brighter sheet of paper. Distributors can carry fewer SKU's and mills will eventually see a more profitable industry. As the industry tightens in capacity, the strong focused mills will survive. Be sure to keep your company aligned with a market leader!