

Errors VIII: Off-Center Printing

In this type of error, all of the printing is present, but it's not in the right place. Usually, one or more of the color overlays have not been centered correctly.

In cover #1, below, the black printing is too far up and too far to the left. In cover #2, all of the blue printing is too far to the left. In cover #3, the black printing is too far to the right and too low. And, in cover #4, the red is off-center.

Cover #4 also illustrates the principle that when the off-center color is light, rather than dark, it often tends to create a 'blurring' perception of the overall design. The reader gets the immediate impression that he or she is 'seeing double'.

Off-center printing, if the printing is off-center enough, may also create other error types, such as a miscuts. The cover is already set to be cut along pre-cut lines. If the printing is significantly skewed to one side, some of it is going to be lost in the cutting. On those miscuts, it often looks as if what was lost, say, on the right side of the cover appears on the left side of the cover...but that's actually not the case. The printing was done in sheets, rather than on individual covers, so when something's off-center on one, it's off-center on all the covers on the sheet. Thus, that 'lost' part of the text or design on one cover usually shows up on the cover *next* to it, not on the opposite side of the same cover.

As with all of the other types of errors, those already discussed and those coming up, it's not all that uncommon to find off-center printing in conjunction with one or more other error types on the same cover, as the example given above already illustrated.

