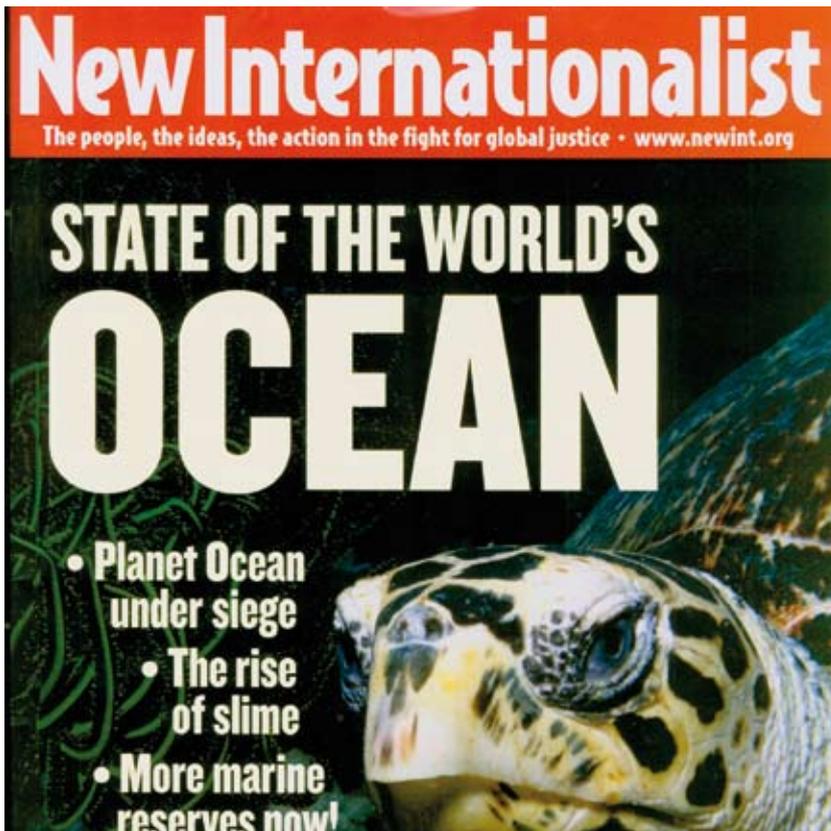


## Case Study: New Internationalist

# Campaigning magazine goes 100% recycled



**New Internationalist is a subscription-only magazine published 11 times a year by the New Internationalist workers' co-operative. Adopting a campaigning stance on a range of world issues, the publication has a clean, simple, almost academic design. It includes process-colour illustrations presented in both a textbook and a news-impact style.**

New Internationalist is around 40 pages long and has a print run of 55,000. Because the magazine has a relatively low number of pages, the paper it is printed on plays a crucial role in determining its bulk and 'feel'.

*'The key driver was the belief that going recycled was the right thing to do'*

## Key Facts

- New Internationalist magazine is printed on paper manufactured from 100% recovered fibre.
- The use of recycled paper underpins the magazine's brand image and reflects the values of the publisher.
- Introducing the paper has not led to any increase in printing or finishing costs.
- There has been no negative feedback from the magazine's subscribers.

Now produced on 80gsm gloss paper made from 100% recovered fibre, the magazine is printed in the UK and Australia using a narrow heat-set web offset (HSWO) process.

## Motivation to 'go recycled'

New Internationalist was first published in 1970, on paper manufactured from 100% virgin fibre. Five years ago, the publisher decided to switch the magazine to 100% recycled paper. The key driver was the strong conviction that this was the right course of action to take in terms of environmental and social responsibility.

The use of recycled paper provides essential reinforcement for the magazine's brand image, with a recycling logo and the following statement appearing in every edition: 'The New Internationalist magazine is printed on 100% post-consumer recycled paper by a printer who has environmental accreditation ISO 14001'. The publisher considers it increasingly important to know the exact sources of the recovered fibre used in the paper.

*“Opting for recycled paper has helped to highlight our values without jeopardising the quality or impact of our magazine”*

**Fran Harvey,**  
New Internationalist

*‘Paper whiteness was the main issue’*

*‘A position of price parity has now been reached’*

*“In our experience, using recycled paper doesn’t mean increasing the cost of printing”*

**Eric Hayhurst,**  
Warners (Midlands) plc

### The process involved

Reflecting the organisation’s ethos, it was necessary for all of the co-operative’s directors to agree on the appropriate course of action to take. The magazine’s editorial, design, marketing and production teams also made a key contribution to the decision-making process. As New Internationalist is subscription-based rather than advertising-led, it was not considered necessary to consult advertisers prior to the change.

There was a general consensus that 100% recycled-content paper should replace the virgin stock previously used. Discussions subsequently centred on exactly which recycled paper would be most suitable for New Internationalist. The contractor responsible for printing the magazine in the UK, Warners (Midlands) plc, was therefore asked to provide around half a dozen examples of publications produced on a variety of recycled papers.

Paper whiteness was the main issue. In direct comparison with the virgin stock, it was evident that the recycled-content stocks were less white. However, in absolute terms, the quality of the recycled papers was appropriate to the needs of New Internationalist.

Once the publisher had drawn up a shortlist of the most promising recycled papers, Warners performed a series of print trials as a run-on to the magazine’s regular print run. Warners and the paper supplier shared the cost of these trials (around £600 in total). Based on the results, the publisher chose 60gsm Ultralux Gloss as the paper that best matched its requirements. Although a small amount of rippling was apparent, the publisher had also experienced this problem when using other papers in the past, including 100% virgin paper and even 90gsm stock.

Responsibility for sourcing the paper is delegated to Warners, which operates a just-in-time policy on paper supply. Only once in five years has an alternative paper had to be used in New Internationalist due to delivery problems – one small section of the magazine had to be printed on virgin stock.

Although 60gsm Ultralux Gloss was used initially, the 80gsm version of this paper is now preferred. This change was possible because changes in postal rates meant a heavier magazine could be distributed without incurring additional postal costs.

### Results and perceptions

In terms of production, there have been no major difficulties during the printing process and it has not been necessary to make any special changes to production methods. Although some problems have arisen in relation to register, especially with small, reversed-out type, the printer has advised that these are related to the paper’s lightweight nature and not its recycled content.

In terms of quality, there has been a noticeable improvement in the paper’s whiteness over the five years that the magazine has been printed on recycled stock. Moreover, there has been no negative feedback whatsoever from the magazine’s subscribers. The readers’ chief environmental concern has been the magazine’s distribution in polywrap packaging. The publisher responded to this concern by switching to the use of recycled manila envelopes.

In terms of cost, the recycled paper was a little more expensive than the virgin stock at the outset. This was acceptable as the paper enabled the publisher to meet its environmental responsibilities. Over the last three years, the cost of the new stock has not increased, eroding the price differential between the recycled paper and the virgin product it replaced. A position of price parity has now more or less been reached. Importantly, the use of recycled paper has not resulted in any increase in printing or finishing costs.





### Conclusions

The publisher of New Internationalist magazine is convinced that switching production to recycled-content paper has been an important, positive and beneficial course of action. No problems have been encountered as a result of making the change and so there are no plans to revert to using virgin stock at any point in the future.

### Summary

The publisher has been totally satisfied with the performance and impact of the 100% recycled paper now used in New Internationalist magazine.

### The printer's experience of recycled papers

Warners (Midlands) plc produces around 3.5 million printed pages a year. Less than 1% of this total output is currently produced on recycled-content paper. The company's infrastructure includes four 16-page web presses and one 32-page web press.

In the experience of Warners' press operators, recycled papers can have different characteristics from virgin papers. In particular, web breaks can occur up to 25% more frequently than with virgin inks, leading to increased production times. However, this problem can be avoided if press settings are balanced appropriately. Primarily, this means reducing feed and dancer tension.

Overall, Warners takes the clear view that recycled-content papers have not increased the cost of printing. As part of a service industry, the company sees its role as providing whatever the customer requires, including the ability to deliver a good-quality printed product on any suitable paper surface.

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