

GRAPHIC OVERLAY

DESIGN GUIDE



MEDICAL • ELECTRONIC • MILITARY/DOD • INDUSTRIAL

WHAT ARE GRAPHIC OVERLAYS?

A graphic overlay is the surface interface between your product and its user when commanding a piece of equipment or control.

WHAT ARE THE PARTS OF A GRAPHIC OVERLAY?

Graphic overlays are typically made from polycarbonate or polyester material, customized ink treatments and an adhesive layer.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF GRAPHIC OVERLAYS?

Graphic overlays have a variety of performance and aesthetic benefits. Built from strong, rugged materials and printed underneath their surface layer, graphic overlays offer exceptional durability that maintains a like-new look for years and years, even in demanding environments. What's more, they allow for branding elements such as graphics, images or proprietary colors to be reproduced in high quality, giving clients the opportunity to design them as attention-grabbing brand reinforcements.

JN White™ produced a graphic overlay for industrial scales that includes two solar panels and a display window.



IMPORTANT GRAPHIC OVERLAY CONSIDERATIONS

SUBSTRATES

The two most common base substrates for graphic overlays are polyester and polycarbonate. Polyester materials are incredibly durable, while polycarbonate materials are more workable for processes such as die cutting, embossing, and other physical effects. JN White™ also utilizes blended substrates that offer the best properties of both polyester and polycarbonate.

DURABILITY

Different environments place varying demands on graphic overlays, and the environment in which yours will be used will largely determine its materials, appearance and features. For example, a graphic overlay used on a construction site may require rugged, durable materials and UV protection, whereas a graphic overlay used for medical device applications may need to withstand constant use and harsh chemical cleaners. At JN White™, we customize every overlay to operate reliably under any conditions, including temperature (especially extreme heat or cold), exposure to dirt, sand, dust and debris, humidity/water, exposure to UV rays, exposure to chemicals, and more.

SURFACE AFFECTION TESTING

Surface affection testing relates to whether a label's surface withstands scratching, chemicals, or other abrasive materials. Some customers require a test as part of their overlay's qualification process. JN White™ performs surface affection testing for all required products and can provide documentation to customers in addition to First Article Inspections (FAIs).

GASKETS, LENSES AND WINDOWS

No matter what you need in an optical window or lens, JN White™ specializes in sourcing unique materials to deliver an exceptional final product. And as a 3M™ preferred converter, we have the ability to laser cut custom tapes and gaskets to fit any tolerance. From military products that require customized anti-reflective surfaces to keep the sun out of soldiers' eyes, to optically clear disposable lenses used with medical devices, we find the exact mix of substrates, films and colors to function flawlessly in any environment.



IMPORTANT GRAPHIC OVERLAY CONSIDERATIONS



EMBOSSING

Embossing can dramatically enhance the look and functionality of your graphic overlay, providing a more tactile and responsive user experience. This may be extremely important in certain work environments and can also have implications on the best material to use for a particular graphic overlay.



DESIRED FINISH

Whether smooth or textured, matte or glossy, your graphic overlay's finish is important to achieve the proper look, both functionally and cosmetically. We'll work hand-in-hand to ensure your product's finish looks exactly how you want it to.



ADHESIVE

Different surface materials have different bonding properties, making it important to know the specifications of your project's housing to determine the most suitable adhesive. Characteristics to consider include surface energy, metal or plastic, smooth or textured, curved or flat, and if there is a powder coating, which is common on painted housings.



COLORS

Depending on your product, it may be important for its graphic overlay to match the housing and/or brand colors. With Pantone color matching services, we can match your overlay with your brand colors and exact graphics—making every product a clean, sharp extension of your brand.



SIZE, THICKNESS AND PLACEMENT

It's important to know if there is a required overlay size and where it will be placed on the product's housing. If the graphic overlay will sit within a cavity and needs to lay flush to the housing, thickness is incredibly important. JN White™ customizes graphic overlays to any size or shape.



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