SOP Reference #: FINISHING003

Operation/Task:	Folding Operations			Equipment:	Folders	
Owner:	Finishing Manager	Date Created:	4/9/2015	Department:	Finishing	
		Revision History:	See last page			

ALERTS (see below):   Critical Step ◆   Quality Check ☑   Tip ☺   Team Safety ✚

Purpose: This SOP/work instruction documents procedures for folding operations.

Step #	Alerts	Step Description - "What to Do"	"How to Do it"	"Why to Do it"
1		See SOP FINISHING000 for all general finishing procedures	• Keep product segregated. Purge after completed.	Keep from co-mingling.
2	◆	Set the machine for the operations required on the Job Ticket.	• Use the marked up folding proof or sample to verify the fold requirements. • Check ticket for next process to accommodate for any special trim allowances or folding requirements which may be needed (ie: stitching/binding). See notes below for standard guidelines for Smyth sewn books • Verify the pieces using the guide and gripper registration marks on signatures to be collated and/or stitched. Typical number of pages in a form are 4, 6, 8, 12, 16 or 32 pages • Adjust the machine for number of pages and fold sequence by tearing off a small portion of the product and placing in to clamps at the various stages of folding. • Set tension	The proof gives a visual representation of the finished product. Each job is different, and adjustments are almost always needed If tension is too tight, it may cause rubbing, if it is too loose, the fold could be crooked or jam up the machine
3		Determine the need and practicality for wet scoring	• If the fold does not lay as flat/crisp as it should, a wet score may be applied to provide a higher quality fold. **This should not be done if Aqueous coating was applied.** ◆IMPORTANT NOTE: Aqueous coating will typically react negatively with the moisture and cause damage to the piece after it dries.	The moisture will work with the paper and provide a cleaner crease.
4		Load product into machine	• Each lift should be placed on belt in the same orientation • Each lift should be fanned and tapped solidly on the side of the stack. • For variable data jobs, special care is to be taken to ensure the address panel is on the outside of the folded piece.	This allows the machine to easily take one piece at a time in a consistent position so that the fold is made at precisely the same location each time. If the product is being sent via USPS, the mailing panel needs to be on the outside so it can be read.

| 5 | ☑ | Quality check the set-up and throughout the run | • Run several pieces through the equipment and verify accuracy
• Check the alignment of the folds using the registration marks, and/or sample and/or proof.
• Check for wrinkles, dog ears or tears in product
• Check for offsetting in rollers and marking on stackers or tables
Note: Alignment must be within 1/32" (visually, approximate) | To meet client expectations |

Notes:

The folding machine to be used for the job is selected by the Finishing Lead or Manager based on availability and size.

Smyth sewn book guidelines:
 ¼" high-folio lip
- No perforations on backbone/no grind-off allowance
- Grain of signatures is parallel to the spine
- All forms uniform in size, trims, and lip orientation
- No inks or coatings for 1/8" along the spine of the first and last text pages where side-glue adheres to

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Definitions:

Lift – convenient handful of material ranging from 1" – 5" tall.

Revision History	Description of Changes	Requested by	Date
Rev 1	Revised SOP to new format.	Troy Bauer	4/9/15
Rev 2	Added Revision History table	Troy Bauer	8/1/16
Rev 3	Removed general SOPs tasks as they are now all defined in SOP FINISHING000. Added steps for additional clarification.	Kathy Osterberg	6/2018
Rev 4	Added standard folding guidelines for Smyth sewn books in notes and added reference to it in task 2	Dan Nelson/ Kathy Osterberg	12/2018
Rev 5	Revised verbiage in Step 2 How to Do it. Revised gray headers.	Liz Nourse	8/5/2020
Rev 6	Updated to current SOP format; branding updates: font, company name; grammar updates; Added new step 3 about wet score; Manager review – No changes	Kevin Washington Tom Wall	5/21
Rev 7	Added verbiage to Step 1 How to Do it and Why to Do it.	Jeff Storeby	6/16/25