

# Guide to Variable Data Printing

**Variable Data Printing (VDP)** is a form of digital printing in which elements can be changed from one printed piece to the next - without stopping or slowing down the printing process.

All variable data printing begins with a basic design that defines static elements and variable fields for the pieces to be printed. While the static elements appear exactly the same on each piece, the variable fields are filled in with text or images as dictated by the information contained in the database.

- The **most basic level** involves changing the salutation or name on each copy, much like mail merge
- **More complicated variable data printing uses “versioning”**, where there may be differing amounts of customization for different markets, with text and images changing for groups of addresses based upon which segment of the market is being addressed
- **Finally there is full variability printing**, where the text and images can be altered for each individual address

## Variable elements can be:

- **text**
- **graphics**
- **images**

and these elements are switched on using information from a database

**A simple variable data project example:** a set of personalized letters, each with the same basic layout, can be printed with a different name and address on each letter.

## Variable data printing is mainly used for:

- **direct marketing**
- **customer relationship management**
- **advertising**
- **invoicing**
- **applying addressing** on self-mailers, brochures or postcard campaigns



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