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# DECO 101: METHODS FOR CREATING BRANDED PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS

by Goldstar Pens

While artwork is **what** gets imprinted on a promotional product, the decoration method determines **how** it gets there. In this article we're covering popular decoration methods and printing techniques that are used to create truly unique, customized advertising tools like promotional products.

## The Decoration Methods

**Full Color**, also referred to as 4 color, uses the CMYK color model to create colorful imprints

- **SimpliColor**® items are decorated using a full-color, CMYK digital imprint method that applies 360-degree, wraparound artwork to our plastic pens and offers a larger imprint area for stationery and other items.
- **ColorJet**™ items are decorated using a full-color, CMYK inkjet imprint method, producing vibrant, high-quality imprints on a variety of media, including metal pens and products with a soft-touch finish.



SimpliColor® wraparound imprint (item #PWI)



ColorJet™ inkjet imprint (item #MMN-C).

**Q.** “If my customer has a 1-color logo, can they still select a full-color item?”

**A.** Yes, any full-color item can be decorated with a 1-color imprint.

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**Silkscreen** or screen printing is a printing technique that involves using a mesh screen, ink and blocking stencil to transfer ink onto a variety of surfaces, including hard surfaces like plastic pens and water bottles, as well as fabrics found on tote bags. Since each ink color is set up individually, silkscreen is more commonly used for 1-or 2-color imprints.

**Pad** printing is a technique that involves first applying an image to a metal plate which is then flooded by ink. Next, a silicone pad is applied to the metal plate, picking up the 2D image. Lastly, the silicone pad is applied to a 3D object, transferring the image to the

product. Pad printing is typically used for 1-color imprints on plastic, curved surfaces, and surfaces difficult to decorate using other methods.



Colored mirror laser engraving (item #MNG)



Item #LXL with standard laser engraving (imprint area 1.75" x .295").



Item #LXL-LM with LaserMax® laser engraving (imprint area 1.75" x .80").

**Laser Engraving** uses a laser beam to etch away a desired area from a product's surface to expose the layer below. The etched design can typically appear as silver, white or gold. It can also serve to expose an LED light that's located within an item, producing a light-up logo when activated.

Additionally, Goldstar offers mirror laser engraving and colored mirror laser engraving options, as well as LaserMax® laser engraving which is twice the height of standard laser engraving areas.



Colored mirror laser engraving (item #MNG)

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