

## Dress Your Proposals for Success :Total Word Count 977

Your business proposals are a key element in the sales of your product, and often will be the deciding factor in whether or not you close the deal. Binding the proposal in a professional way will assure your success in making the project look like the high end package it is supposed to be.

Gary Jones, president of [LloydsOfIndiana.com](http://LloydsOfIndiana.com) comments, "A \$50,000 proposal should not be presented in a \$2 plastic folder."

Too often we neglect the proposal cover and present something less than we might offer had we simply spent the nominal amount necessary to purchase a binding machine to give us the competitive edge in marketing our product. Putting the right cover on your proposal can make the difference between making \$10,000 on your project, making \$20,000, or simply losing the bid to another provider.

Many of us, being unaware of the various methods of binding, or in an attempt to save what might amount to a few dollars, will present a proposal in such a way that it screams "inappropriate" to anyone who views it. The proposal wrapped in that \$1.50 office supply store report cover might be worth a great deal, it might even be far better than that of our competitors, yet if it is not presented in such a way that it reflects well on our company, in many cases it will be overlooked for those which do. Imagine the frustration of losing bid after bid and not understanding the reasons for it.

As Lloyd's of Indiana's Jones comments, "I wonder how many proposals I've lost over the years because I didn't take the time and spend the \$5 necessary to make my proposal look like a million bucks."

Plastic binders, stapled pages or two dollar office supply store binders just don't project the image that builds confidence and shows that corners will not be cut. A proposal isn't completed until its properly attired for a successful foray into the business world. Some general guidelines to aid you in deciding what is and is not the appropriate dress for your particular proposal are:

- ◆ If the project will net under 5K, it is acceptable to use plastic binding to present the proposal
- ◆ Between 5k and 15K, you will be better served to use a wire spiral type of binding.
- ◆ For anything over 20K, only hardbound, book style binding is appropriate dressing for your proposal.

It is so much less costly in the long run to purchase that binding machine,(which may cost your company 150.00-\$1000) and to bind your proposals properly before you send them out.

Binding your proposals takes little time and costs relatively little when compared to losing business.

Binding machines range in price from \$150 for a basic plastic comb binding machine to several thousand for a high capacity, fully automatic steel binding system. The cost of supplies is depends on they type of binding, finish and size of the document. Plastic comb is generally the least expensive, where a perfect binding machine (which literally makes cloth bound hardback books) will be the most expensive. For many businesses, the Unibind system is a great choice because of it's versatility. For low dollar proposals, Unibind can apply a simple clear plastic or card stock cover. For higher end documents, Unibind can bind your proposal in a logo embossed book-style hard cover.

Unibind is also unique in that binding materials can be reused and mistakes can easily be corrected. According to Garry Jones, "Unibind is especially good if you are prone to making mistakes. You can unbind your proposal, replace the page with the mistake and rebind it an no one will know the

difference.” A Unibind binding machine costs about \$550 with supplies ranging from \$1.25 for a clear plastic soft cover to \$4-\$8 for a hardbound, cloth finished book cover.

Dressing up your proposal will never cover for proposing the wrong solution, poor writing and uncompetitive pricing. Finishing your proposal with appropriate binding will provide a glimpse of the pride you take in your company and your company's attention to detail and workmanship. Secondary only to the proposals content should be the way in which it is presented, which will afford your recipient a glimpse of the pride you take in both your company and your workmanship. Attention to detail sells.

### **About Lloydsof Indiana.com**

Founded by Lloyd Jones in the late 1980's, Lloyds of Indiana's mission is to provide the most professional service available in combination with friendly and personal customer service at great prices. Fifty years of combined business experience have Lloyd's the important principles of honest service and good value. LloydsofIndiana.com continues to be a family owned and operated company, dedicated to helping you find the road to your own success.

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