

Ten Simple Steps to Make Your Next Roll Goods Trial a Success



Looking for best practices for roll goods trials? Optimize your next trial with these tips from the Micrex development team.

As an introduction, there is some good news and some bad news. First the bad news: trials are expensive, difficult and prone to failure. Now the good news: With some careful planning and attention to the “easy stuff”, you can maximize the success of your next trial.

1. Pay attention to the logistics: Send the right materials to the right location on time.

You can't run a trial unless the material is there. Have you allowed enough time for any unexpected delay? Be sure to confirm that your materials have arrived in good condition at the trial site. We have seen countless trials ruined even before they start because of logistical issues.

2. Make sure your material is sized to fit the trial equipment.

Check beforehand that you are sending material in the correct format (e.g. diameter, width, weight, and core size).

3. Format after trial: Tell the vendor which format you want your material in at the end of the trial.

By format we are talking about slit widths, trim, roll size, core size and type, along with packaging requirements.

4. Confirm that your vendor understands your material's unique characteristics.

In reality roll goods are like snowflakes: no two are exactly the same. What you consider to be a normal variation in your material could be a deal breaker in the vendor's process.

If you would like to discuss a trial or have any questions, please contact:

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5. **Familiarize yourself with the vendor's process.**

At Micrex we find that customers often make assumptions that certain things will not matter, when in fact they turn out to be critical for us. An example of this is print or finish on a sheet, which can make the sheet unusable for your trial.

6. **Go in with a plan for what you want to achieve, and what variables will be adjusted during the trial.**

"Just see what happens" is a poor excuse for a lack of a trial plan. Before you even select materials, you can increase the chances of success by working out a detailed trial plan through with the vendor.

7. **Communicate throughout the trial.**

Trials are by definition opportunities to learn and explore different options. But they only work if the entire team communicates and knows what is going on. In this way, you can take full advantage of the development team's expertise.

8. **Learn from the trial: Pay attention to the trial learnings upon completion.**

Even a 100% failure can be useful if it contributes to an eventual solution.

9. **Be sure that your finished materials are returned in good condition, in a timely manner and to the right place.**

It is easy to avoid having trial material get lost or damaged with proper labeling, etc.: specific shipping instructions coupled with clear marking is key.

10. **Look for quick turnaround time.**

Successful customers and vendors work together to accelerate the time it takes to plan and execute a trial. We are constantly amazed by how companies will take months to accomplish something that should take days. Finding a way around institutional roadblocks is vital to successful product development.

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