2027 STAR AWARDS

CALL FOR ENTRIES

Deadline: February 3, 2027

CATEGORY LIST

PIM
PRINTING INDUSTRY midwest

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2027 PIM Star Awards *Category List*

www.pimw.org/star-awards/

For pieces printed between January 1, 2026 to December 31, 2026

Please read the details carefully! There is no limit to the amount of categories you can enter into, each entry costs $40. If you enter the same project into multiple categories, it is still $40 per entry.

A) Presentation Folders & Binders

A-1 Presentation Folders & Portfolios (1, 2, or 3 colors)

A-2 Presentation Folders & Portfolios (4 or more colors)

A-3 Binders (Loose-leaf)
- Cut-flush, turned-edge case-bound. Binders with inserts will be judged by the quality of the entire package, including both binder and inserts. Stand-alone binders that wish to be judged on specific components, such as a trapped pre-printed insert, should provide a description of the production process.

B) Brochures, Booklets & Flyers

B-1 Brochures & Broadsides - Small
- Piece that is folded from a sheet 11″x17″ or smaller and is not stapled or bound.

B-2 Brochures & Broadsides - Large
- Piece that is folded from a sheet larger than 11″x17″ and is not stapled or bound.

B-3 Booklets (1, 2, or 3 colors)
- 72 pages or fewer, bound (saddle stitched, perfect, Wire-O, not case bound).

B-4 Booklets (4 or more colors, printers with 100 employees or less)
- 72 pages or less, bound (saddle stitched, perfect, Wire-O, not case bound).

B-5 Booklets (4 or more colors,printers with more than 101 employees)
- 72 pages or less, bound (saddle stitched, perfect, Wire-O, not case bound).

B-6 Flyers (4 or more colors)
- Flyers are a single, flat sheet, 1 or 2 sides.

B-7 Booklet or Brochure Series
- A series consists of two or more booklets, brochures, or a combination of the two, of any size, bound or not, related by content or intended audience.

C) Catalogs

C-1 Product & Service Catalogs
- Catalogs for consumer, business, specialized markets, art exhibits, museums, schools, colleges, universities, or service-providing commercial firms.

C-2 Product Catalogs (4 or more colors, printers with 100 employees or less)
- Catalogs for consumer, business, and specialized markets.

C-3 Product Catalogs (4 or more colors, printers with more than 101 employees)
- Catalogs for consumer, business, and specialized markets.

C-4 Product Catalogs (4 or more colors, creative companies & agencies)
- Catalogs for consumer, business, and specialized markets.

C-5 Service Catalogs (4 or more colors)
- Specifically for art exhibits, museums, schools, colleges, universities, as well as service providing commercial firms.

C-6 Product & Service Catalogs (Cover—sheetfed; Interior—web)
- Catalogs for consumer, business, specialized markets, art exhibits, museums, schools, colleges, universities, or service-providing commercial firms.

D) Books, Book Jackets & Diaries

D-1 Juvenile Books
- Does not include school textbooks.

D-2 Hard-Cover Books

D-3 Soft-Cover Books

D-4 School Textbooks
- Elementary through college.

D-5 School Yearbooks

D-6 Book Jackets
- Please submit jacket with book for presentation purposes. Only the book jacket will be judged.

D-7 Novelty Books
- That which is new and unusual.

D-8 Diaries

D-9 Art Books (1, 2, or 3 colors)
- "Coffee-table" books devoted to the reproduction of art, photography, or artistic collections only.

D-10 Art Books (4 or more colors)
- "Coffee-table" books devoted to the reproduction of art, photography, or artistic collections only.

D-11 Cookbooks
- Books that are devoted to culinary topics and food preparation.

E) Magazines & Magazine Inserts

E-1 Fashion & Popular Culture Magazines
- Magazines focused on fashion, health, and popular culture.

E-2 Architectural, Art & Travel Magazines (printers with 100 employees or less)

E-3 Architectural, Art & Travel Magazines (printers with more than 101 employees)

E-4 Magazines (Cover-sheetfed; Interior-web)

E-5 Magazine Inserts

E-6 Magazine Series
- Entry must consist of multiple issues of the same magazine title during a one-year period. Work will be judged

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on consistency of printing and design in the series. At least three different issues must be submitted in order to be eligible for judging.

F) Internal Communication Pieces

F-1 Internal Communication Pieces
- Publications produced exclusively for the internal communication needs of a single company or organization.

G) Newsletters

G-1 Newsletters

H) Business & Annual Reports

H-1 Business & Annual Reports
(4 or more colors, printers with 100 employees or less)

H-2 Business & Annual Reports
(4 or more colors, printers with more than 101 employees)

I) Point-of-Purchase Materials

I-1 Point-of-Purchase Materials - Large
- Includes any large in-store promotional materials such as floor displays or large hanging displays.

I-2 Point-of-Purchase Materials - Small
- Includes any in-store promotional materials such as take-ones, counter cards, shelf displays, etc.

J) Posters & Art Prints

Entries must be the actual poster or print; do not send photographs or slides.

J-1 Posters
- Wall posters, truck or window posters, car cards, or calendar posters intended for use as promotion or decoration. **Please ship entries flat**.

J-2 Art Prints
- Reproductions of fine art intended for use as decoration, no books or brochures. **Please ship entries flat**.

K) Cards

K-1 Cards
- Christmas cards, greeting cards, postcards and blank notes.

L) Invitations & Programs

L-1 Invitations (1, 2, or 3 colors)

L-2 Invitations (4 or more colors)

L-3 Programs

M) Calendars

M-1 Calendars

M-2 Desk Calendars

N) Digital Printing

N-1 Digital Printing— Brochures & Booklets
- 72 pages or less, bound (saddle stitched, perfect, Wire-O, not case bound).

N-2 Digital Printing—Juvenile Books
- Does not include textbooks.

N-3 Digital Printing—Novelty Books
- That which is new and unusual.

N-4 Digital Printing—Cookbooks
- Books that are devoted to culinary topics and food preparation.

N-5 Digital Printing—Packaging
- High quality packaging on a variety of formats and materials on digital presses.

N-6 Customized, Personalized & Variable-Data Digital Printing
- Personalized or customized product. Piece may be a "shell," produced in quantity using offset lithography or other print process. Entries must include at least two different pieces from the run and a brief description (a sentence or two) of the project, the system, and technique used to produce the entry.

O) Finishing Techniques

O-1 Foil Stamping

O-2 Digital Enhancement Printing

O-3 Embossing & Debossing

O-4 Diecuts & Pop-Ups

O-5 Specialty Inks
- This could include coatings, fragrances or invisible printing inks. **Entry must provide a description of the technique.**

O-6 Folding
- Any piece which demonstrates the following characteristics: squareness, lineup consistency, lack of cracking and wrinkles, gussets, smudging, marking, and scuffing. Examples of entries—gate folds, miniature folding, map folding, special, unique, or difficult folds.

O-7 Binding
- Includes adhesive binding (perfect binding, notch binding, Smythe-sewn glued covers, side wire stitched glued-on covers), case binding (pages are arranged in signatures, sewn together & hard covers are attached), & mechanical binding (single or double wire, Plasticoil & plastic binding).

O-8 Other Special Finishing Techniques
- Includes stitching, gluing, hand work, or any other finishing technique not covered in the categories above. **Entry must provide a description of the technique.**

P) Alternative Printing Methods

P-1 Hi-Fidelity Printing
- Print using more than 4 colors in halftone areas to enhance images & graphics.

P-2 Stochastic Printing

R) Stationery and Office Materials

R-1 Letterhead

R-2 Business Cards

R-3 Envelopes - Includes all sizes

R-4 Stationery Packages
- Includes letterhead, envelopes, and business cards.

S) Environmentally Sound

S-1 Environmentally Sound
- Submit an entry and a paragraph describing the materials and processes employed. **Entries submitted without an accompanying description will be disqualified.** Entries must use at least two of the following:
  - Recycled papers
  - Soy or vegetable-based inks
  - Direct-to-plate
  - Aqueous coating, energy-curable inks & coatings. Other environmentally sound products not mentioned above

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T) Packaging & Labels

T-1 Cartons, Containers, Boxes & Totes
- Includes single cartons and containers or an integrated series. Integrated series should be entered as a single unit with one entry fee.

T-2 Media Packaging
- Record covers, DVDs, Blu-Ray discs, video games.

T-3 Labels & Wraps - Cut and stack, sheetfed
- Includes single labels and wraps or an integrated series. It is strongly recommended that the entry be submitted adhered to the actual product. Integrated series should be entered as a single unit with one entry fee.

T-4 Labels & Wraps— Rolled products/ pressure-sensitive
- Includes single labels and wraps or an integrated series. It is strongly recommended that the entry be submitted adhered to the actual product. Integrated series should be entered as a single unit with one entry fee.

T-5 Flexographic Printing
- Includes narrow-web labels and wraps, rolled products, pressure-sensitive, wide-web process, and wide-web line.

U) Print & Graphic Arts Self-Promotion

Entries may include more than one item if the material was mailed as a single unit or was part of a campaign. If the entry includes more than one item, please submit the entry in an envelope.

U-1 Print & Graphic Arts Self-Promotion
- Prepress companies, finishing, advertising, and other graphic arts firms

V) Web Press Printing

V-1 Web Press Printing (Coated Paper)

V-2 Web Press Printing (Uncoated Paper)

W) Marketing & Promotional Materials

Entries in categories W-1 through W-5 must include more than one piece. Entrant should have printed substantially all parts of the finished package.

W-1 Promotional Campaigns & Business-to-Business
- A coordinated effort to promote a business, product, or service that may or may not use mail as a means of distribution.

W-2 Promotional Campaigns & Consumer
- A coordinated effort to promote a business, product, or service that may or may not use mail as a means of distribution.

W-3 Direct Mail Campaigns & Business-to-Business
- Uses mail as its exclusive means of distribution; objective is to promote to another business.

W-4 Direct Mail Campaigns & Consumer
- Uses mail as its exclusive means of distribution; objective is to entice the consumer to purchase.

W-5 Media Kits
- A single package of promotional or informational materials packed into a folder or carrier for distribution.

W-6 Single Promotional Self-Mailer

W-7 Cross-Media Promotion
- Entries in Cross-Media Promotion must show a combination of involvement in at least three areas of a broad spectrum of creative services. Campaign must include print plus any combination of collateral, website, information architecture, interior or exterior design, construction, programming, video production, photography, Flash marketing presentations, and/or Online Marketing Campaigns ("OMC"). Entries are judged on overall quality and consistency in cross-media compliance and identification. **Entries submitted without an accompanying description will be disqualified.**

X) Specialty Printing

X-1 Large-Format Printing
- Materials in one or more colors with at least one dimension measuring in excess of 60 inches. Submit with a paragraph describing the production process used. If possible, please ship entries in a manner that does not compromise the piece (if the item is too large to ship flat, roll and package accordingly; folding often damages the piece so that judges do not have an accurate sense of the piece). **Entries submitted without an accompanying description will be disqualified.**

X-2 Decorative Printing
- Wallpaper, wrapping paper.

X-3 Fabric & Textile Printing
- Metal decorating, printing on textiles, fabrics, or vinyl.

X-4 Miscellaneous Specialties—Other
- Materials that do not fit the criteria for any other category. Examples: banners, menus, matchbooks, record covers, maps, playing cards, decals, metal decorating, printing on textiles, fabrics, or vinyls, holograms, DVDs, Blu-Ray Discs, and silk-screened items. Submit entry and a paragraph describing materials and processes employed. **Entries submitted without an accompanying description will be disqualified.**

Y) Special Innovation Awards

Y-1 Special Innovation Awards—Printing
- Entries in this category must be submitted with a statement as to why the piece is innovative. Examples include new, expanded, or unique use of technology or an innovative mix of existing technologies. **Entries submitted without accompanying description will be disqualified.**

Z) They Said It Couldn't Be Done

Z-1 They Said It Couldn't Be Done
- This category is for printers who exceed limitations and expectations when tackling the numerous challenges faced on the toughest jobs. Entries must include a copy of the finished piece, and a paragraph describing the challenges of the job and how they were overcome. **Entries not containing all required elements will be disqualified.**

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