Of all the writing materials mankind has employed down through the ages, paper has become the most widely used around the world. Paper has a long history stretching back to ancient Egypt in the third millennium BC. The word ‘paper’ is derived from papyrus, a plant that was once abundant in Egypt. Paper as we know it traces its roots back to China at the beginning of the first millennium AD. Originally intended purely for writing and printing purposes, a dazzling array of paper products are available to today’s consumer.