

A *job* is a list of  $m$  versions of uniformly-sized rectangular printed pieces, represented as an  $m$ -tuple of positive integers:

$$V = (v_1, \dots, v_m)$$

An  $n$ -up *form* is an arrangement of  $n$  uniformly-sized rectangular images on a single printed press sheet that can be cut into individual pieces after printing. A form is represented as an  $m$ -tuple of non-negative integers:  $(f_1, \dots, f_m)$ , where each  $f_i$  is the number of copies of version  $v_i$  on the press sheet and  $\sum f_i = n$ . Then the set of all possible  $n$ -up forms for  $m$  versions is given by

$$F_{m,n} = \{(f_1, \dots, f_m) \mid \sum_{i=1}^m f_i = n\}$$

Note that the number of such forms is the number of weak compositions<sup>1</sup> of  $n$  in  $m$  terms, giving

$$|F_{m,n}| = \binom{m+n-1}{n-1}$$

An  $N$ -tuple  $(x_1, \dots, x_N)$ , where  $N = |F_{m,n}|$ , is a *solution* for job  $V$  if

$$\sum_{i=1}^N x_i f_j \geq v_j, \text{ for all } 1 \leq j \leq m$$

Conceptually,  $x_i$  is the quantity of the press run of the  $i$ th form.

Let the cost of a press run of quantity  $x > 0$  be defined as  $Ax + B$ , where  $A$  is the cost per sheet and  $B$  is the fixed set up cost of a press run. Then the cost function of a solution is

$$c(x_1, \dots, x_N) = \begin{cases} Ax_i + B & x > 0 \\ 0 & x = 0 \end{cases}$$

**Question.** Given a job  $V$  run  $n$ -up with cost per sheet  $A$  and set up cost  $B$  per press run, what solution  $(x_1, \dots, x_N)$  has the minimum cost?

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<sup>1</sup>see [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Composition\\_\(combinatorics\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Composition_(combinatorics)).