

GLOSSARY OF PRINTING & GRAPHIC TERMS



A

A4: ISO paper size 210 x 297mm

Alteration: Any change made by the customer after copy or artwork has been given to the printer. The change could be in copy, specifications or both. Also called AA, author alteration and customer alteration.

Artwork: All original copy, including type, photos and illustrations, intended for printing.

B

Binding: Usually a department within a printing company responsible for collating, folding and trimming various printing projects.

Bleed: Printing that extends to the edge of a sheet or page after trimming.

Blind Image: Image debossed, embossed or stamped, but not printed with ink or foil.

Board Paper: General term for paper over 200 gsm that is commonly used for products such as file folders, displays and post cards.

Book Paper: Category of paper suitable for books, magazines, catalogues, advertising and general printing needs. Book paper is divided into uncoated paper (also called offset paper), coated paper (also called art paper).

Bristol Paper: General term referring to paper 200-500 gsm. Used for products such as index cards, file folders and displays.

C

Carbonless Paper: Paper coated with chemicals that enable transfer of images from one sheet to another with pressure from writing or typing.

CMYK: Abbreviation for Cyan, Magenta, Yellow and Black, the four process colours.

Coarse Screen: Halftone screen with ruling of 65, 85 or 100 lines per inch (26, 34 or 40 lines centimetre).

Coated Paper: Paper with a coating of clay and other substances that improves reflectivity and ink holdout. Mills produce coated paper in the four major categories cast, gloss, silk and matte.

Collate: To organize printed matter in a specific order as requested.

Colour Control Bar: Strip of small blocks of colour on a press sheet to help evaluate features such as density and dot gain. Also called colour bar.

Contrast: The degree of tones in an image ranging from highlight to shadow.

Crossover: Type or art that continues from one page of a book or magazine across the gutter to the opposite page.

Cure: To dry inks, varnishes or other coatings after printing to ensure good adhesion and prevent setoff.

D

Deboss: To press an image into paper so it lies below the surface.

Desktop Publishing: Technique of using a personal computer to design images and pages, and assemble type and graphics, then using a laser printer or imagesetter to output the assembled pages onto paper, film or printing plate.

Die: Device for cutting, scoring, stamping, embossing and debossing.

Die Cut: To cut irregular shapes in paper or paperboard using a die.

Digital Proofing: Page proofs produced through electronic memory transferred onto paper via laser or ink-jet.

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Dot Gain: Phenomenon of halftone dots printing larger on paper than they are on films or plates, reducing detail and lowering contrast. Also called dot growth, dot spread and press gain.

Dots-per-inch: Measure of resolution of input devices such as scanners, display devices such as monitors, and output devices such as laser printers, imagesetters and monitors. Abbreviated DPI. Also called dot pitch.

Double Black Duotone: Duotone printed from two halftones, one shot for highlights and the other shot for midtones and shadows.

Drill: In the printing arena, to drill a hole in a printed matter.

Dummy: Simulation of the final product. Also called mockup.

Duotone: Black-and-white photograph reproduced using two halftone negatives, each shot to emphasize different tonal values in the original.

E

Emboss: To press an image into paper so it lies above the surface.

Encapsulated PostScript file: Computer file containing both images and PostScript commands. Abbreviated EPS file.

End Sheet: Sheet that attaches the inside pages of a case bound book to its cover. Also called end papers.

Estimate: Price that states what a job will probably cost.

F

Film Laminate: Thin sheet of plastic bonded to a printed product for protection or increased gloss.

Fine Papers: Papers made specifically for writing or commercial printing, as compared to coarse papers and industrial papers. Also called cultural papers and graphic papers.

Fine Screen: Screen with ruling of 150 lines per inch (80 lines per centimetre) or more.

Fixed Costs: Costs that remain the same regardless of how many pieces are printed. Copyrighting, photography and design are fixed costs.

Flat Colour: (1) Any colour created by printing only one ink, as compared to a colour created by printing four-colour process. Also called block colour and spot colour. (2) colour that seems weak or lifeless.

Foil Emboss: To foil stamp and emboss an image.

Foil Stamp: Method of printing that releases foil from its backing when stamped with the heated die. Also called hot foil stamp.

Four-colour Process Printing: Technique of printing that uses cyan, magenta, yellow and black to simulate full-colour images. Also called full colour printing.

G

Gate Fold: A sheet that folds where both sides fold toward the gutter in overlapping layers.

Gathered: Signatures assembled next to each other in the proper sequence for binding, as compared to nested. Also called stacked.

Ghost Halftone: Normal halftone whose density has been reduced to produce a very faint image.

Graduated Screen Tint: Screen tint that changes densities gradually and smoothly, not in distinct steps. Also called degrade, gradient, ramped screen and vignette.

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Grain Direction: Predominant direction in which fibers in paper become aligned during manufacturing. Also called machine direction.

Grain Long Paper: Paper whose fibers run parallel to the long dimension of the sheet. Also called long grain paper and narrow web paper.

Grain Short Paper: Paper whose fibers run parallel to the short dimension of the sheet. Also called short grain paper and wide web paper.

Grammage: Basis weight of paper in grams per square meter (gsm).

Grey Balance: Printed cyan, magenta and yellow halftone dots that accurately, reproduce a neutral grey image.

Grey Component Replacement: Technique of replacing grey tones in the cyan, magenta and yellow films, made while colour separating, with black ink. Abbreviated GCR. Also called achromatic colour removal.

Grey Levels: Number of distinct grey tones that can be reproduced by a computer.

Grey Scale: Strip of grey values ranging from white to black. Used by process camera and scanner operators to calibrate exposure times for film and plates. Also called step wedge.

GSM: The unit of measurement for paper weight (grams per square metre).

H

Head-to-tail: Imposition with heads (tops) of pages facing tails (bottoms) of other pages.

Highlights: Lightest portions of a photograph or halftone, as compared to midtones and shadows.

Hinged Cover: Perfect bound cover scored 3mm from the spine so it folds at the hinge

instead of, along the edge of the spine.

I

Ink-Jet Printing: Method of printing by spraying droplets of ink through computer-controlled nozzles.

Inserts: Within a publication, an additional item positioned into the publication loose (not bound in).

Intaglio Printing: Printing method whose image carriers are surfaces with two levels, having inked areas lower than non-inked areas. Gravure and engraving are the most common forms of intaglio. Also called recess printing.

ISBN: A number assigned to a published work and usually found either on the title page or the back of the title page. Considered an International Standard Book Number.

J

Job Ticket: Form used by printers to specify production schedule of a job and the materials it needs. Also called docket, production order and work order.

K

Kiss Die Cut: To die cut the top layer, but not the backing layer, of self-adhesive paper.

L

Laminate: A thin transparent plastic sheet (coating) applied to usually a thick stock (covers, post cards, etc.) providing protection against liquid and heavy use, and usually accents existing colour, providing a glossy effect.

Landscape: Artist style in which width is greater than height. (Portrait is opposite).

Leading: Amount of space between lines of type.

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Letterpress: Method of printing from raised surfaces, either metal type or plates whose surfaces have been etched away from image areas.

Logo: A company, partnership or corporate creation (design) that denotes a unique entity. A possible combination of letters and art work to create a “sole” entity symbol of that specific unit.

M

Makeready: (1) All activities required to prepare a press or other machines to function for a specific printing or bindery job, as compared to production run. Also called setup. (2) Paper used in the makeready process at any stage in production. Makeready paper is part of waste or spoilage.

Manuscript (MS): An author’s original form of work (hand written, typed or on disk) submitted for publication.

Metallic Ink: Ink containing powdered metal or pigments that simulate metal.

Metallic Paper: Paper coated with a thin film of plastic or pigment whose colour and gloss simulate metal.

Midtones: In a photograph or illustration, tones created by dots between 30 percent and 70 percent of coverage, as compared to highlights and shadows.

N

Nested: Signatures assembled inside one another in the proper sequence for binding, as compared to gathered.

Neutral Grey: Grey with no hue or cast.

O

Offset Printing: Printing technique that transfers ink from a plate to a blanket to paper instead of directly from plate to paper.

Opacity: (1) Characteristic of paper or other substrate that prevents printing on one side from showing through the other side. (2) Characteristic of ink that prevents the substrate from showing through.

Overprint: To print one image over a previously printed image, such as printing type over a screen tint.

Over Run: Additional printed matter beyond order.

P

Panel: One page of a brochure, such as one panel of a rack brochure. One panel is on one side of the paper. A letter-folded sheet has six panels, not three.

Parallel Fold: Method of folding. Two parallel folds to a sheet will produce 6 panels.

PE: Proofreader mark meaning printer error and showing a mistake by a typesetter, prepress service or printer as compared to an error by the customer.

Perfect Bind: To bind sheets that have been ground at the spine and are held to the cover by glue. Also called glue bind, soft bind and soft cover.

Perf Marks: On a “dummy” marking where the perforation is to occur.

Perforating: Taking place on a press or a binder machine, creating a line of small dotted holes for the purpose of tearing-off a part of a printed matter.

Pica: A unit of measure in the printing industry. A pica is approximately 4.233333mm. There are 12 points to a pica.

Pixel: Short for picture element, a dot made by a computer, scanner or other digital device.

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Pleasing Colour: Colour that the customer considers satisfactory even though it may not precisely match original samples, scenes or objects.

PMS: The Pantone Matching System referred to as [PMS] is a standardized colour reproduction system that allows for many 'special' colours to be produced including metallics.

Point: Regarding type, a unit of measure equaling 1/12 pica (0.352777mm).

Portrait: An art design in which the height is greater than the width. (Opposite of Landscape).

Post Bind: To bind using a screw and post inserted through a hole in a pile of loose sheets.

Prepress: Colour separations, platemaking and other prepress functions performed by the printer, prior to printing. Also called preparation.

Press Proof: Proof made on press using the plates, ink and paper specified for the job. Also called trial or test proof.

Printing: Any process that transfers to paper or another substrate an image from an original such as a film negative or positive, electronic memory, stencil, die or plate.

Printing Plate: Surface carrying an image to be printed.

Process Colour (Inks): The colours used for four-colour process printing: cyan, magenta, yellow and black.

Q

Quality: Subjective term relating to expectations by the customer, printer and other professionals associated with a printing job and whether the job meets those expectations.

Quotation: Price offered by a printer to produce a specific job.

R

Ream: 500 sheets of paper.

Recycled Paper: New paper made entirely or in part from old paper.

Resolution: Sharpness of an image on film, paper, computer screen, disc, tape or other medium.

Reverse: Type, graphic or illustration reproduced by printing ink around its outline, thus allowing the underlying color or paper to show through and form the image. The image 'reverses out' of the ink colour.

Raised Printing: See thermography.

S

Saddle Stitch: To bind by stapling sheets together where they fold at the spine, as compared to side stitch.

Scanner: Electronic device used to scan an image.

Score: To compress paper along a straight line so it folds more easily and accurately. Also called crease.

Screen Angles: Angles at which screens intersect with the horizontal line of the press sheet. The common screen angles for separations are cyan 105°, magenta 75°, yellow 90° and black 45°.

Screen Ruling: Number of rows or lines of dots per inch or centimetre in a screen for making a screen tint or halftone. Also called line count, ruling, screen frequency, screen size and screen value.

Screen Tint: Colour created by dots instead of solid ink coverage.

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Self Cover: A Publication having the cover and the inside pages printed on the same type and thickness of paper.

Separations: Usually in the four-colour process arena, separate film holding images of one specific colour per piece of film. Cyan, Magenta, Yellow and Black. Can also separate specific PMS colours through film.

Shadows: Darkest areas of a photograph or illustration, as compared to midtones and high-lights.

Side stitch: To bind by stapling through sheets along, one edge, as compared to saddle stitch.

Solid: Any area of the sheet receiving 100% ink coverage, as compared to a screen tint.

Specifications: Complete and precise written description of features of a printing job such as type size and leading, paper grade and quantity, printing or binding method.

Spine: Back or binding edge of a publication.

Spiral Bind: To bind using a spiral of continuous wire or plastic looped through holes. Also called coil bind.

Spot Colour or Varnish: One ink or varnish applied to portions of a sheet, as compared to flood or painted sheet.

Spread: Two pages that face each other and are designed as one visual or production unit.

SWOP: Abbreviation for specifications for web offset publications, specifications recommended for web printing of publications.

T

Tagged Image File Format: Computer file format used to store images from scanners and video devices. Abbreviated TIFF.

Template: Design of an item (or a group of items) that serves as a basis or guide for designing similar items.

Thermography: Method of printing using colourless resin powder that takes on the colour of underlying ink. Also called raised printing.

Tint: Screening or adding white to a solid colour for results of lightening that specific colour.

Trapping: A method of adjusting areas where two distinct, adjacent colors meet so that press misregistration won't cause white spaces.

Trim Marks: Also known as crop marks. Marks needed to help the printer determine where to trim the paper

Trim Size: The size of the printed material in its finished stage.

U

Uncoated Paper: Paper that has not been coated with clay. Also called offset paper.

Undercolour Removal: Technique of making colour separations such that the amount of cyan, magenta and yellow ink is reduced in midtone and shadow areas while the amount of black is increased. Abbreviated UCR.

Universal Copyright Convention (UCC): A system to protect unique work from reproducing without knowledge from the originator. To qualify, one must register their work and publish a "©" indicating registration.

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V

Varnish: Liquid applied as a coating for protection and appearance.

Vignette Halftone: Halftone whose background gradually and smoothly fades away.

Virgin Paper: Paper made exclusively of pulp from trees or cotton, as compared to recycled paper.

W

Watermark: Translucent logo in paper created during manufacturing by slight embossing from a dandy roll while paper is still approximately 90 percent water.

Widow: A widow is a very short line, usually one word, or the end of a hyphenated word – at the end of a paragraph or column. A widow is considered poor typography because it leaves too much white space between paragraphs or at the bottom of a page.

With the Grain: Parallel to the grain direction of the paper being used, as compared to against the grain. See also Grain Direction.

Wrong Reading: An image that is backwards when compared to the original. Also called reflect and reverse reading.