

GLOSSARY OF PRINTING TERMS

Accordion fold	Folding paper by bending each fold in the opposite direction of the previous fold creating a pleated or accordion effect.
Acid-free paper	A paper containing no acidity or acid producing chemicals that degrades less over time than acidic papers.
Against the Grain	Running a sheet of paper through a printing press at right angles to the grain direction of the paper, as opposed to with the grain. This is usually suboptimal for both press operation and registration of the 4 color process inks. Sometimes called cross grain.
Anti-aliasing	The process of averaging between pixels of different colours. This results in a smoother, more blended transition between the edge of two areas rather than a distinctly jagged appearance.
Aqueous Coating	This clear coating is used to protect printed pieces. It provides a high-gloss surface that deters dirt and fingerprints. Aqueous coating improves the durability of postcards as they go through the mail, and protects business cards as they ride around in people's pockets. It also looks beautiful on brochures, catalog covers, and stand-alone flyers.
Ascender	Any part of a lower case letter which rises above the main body of the letter such as in "d", "b" and "h".
Back Up	How an image on one side of a printed sheet aligns with the image on the other side.
Base line	The imaginary horizontal line upon which stand capitals, lower case letters, punctuation points, etc.
Bindery	A business or department within a printing company that does the cutting, folding, collating, drilling and other finishing operations used on printing projects.
Blanket	The rubberized surfaced material secured onto a cylinder onto which the ink is transferred from the plate and then to the paper.
Bleed	Any element that extends up to or past the edge of a printed page.
Blind emboss	A design or bas relief impression that is made without using inks or metal foils.
Blocking	When ink or coating causes printed sheets of paper in a pile to stick together, causing damage when they are separated. This is normally caused by not enough anti-offset powder or too much ink, and usually ruins the printed job. Also called setoff.
Bond	A grade of durable writing, printing and typing paper that is erasable and somewhat rigid.
Bulk	A term given to paper to describe its thickness relative to its weight.
Bullet	A boldface square or dot used before a sentence to emphasize its importance.

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C1S and C2S	Acronyms for Coated One Side and Coated Two Sides paper stock. A cover stock with a glossy finish on one side and uncoated on the other.
Carbonless Paper (NCR)	Paper that is chemically treated to transfer the impression from the first page to the subsequent pages. Also called NCR or No Carbon required.
Cast Coated	A paper that is coated and then pressure dried using a polished roller that imparts an enamel like hard gloss finish.
Cello Coating	Cello Coating or Cello Glazing is very thin lamination finish, either gloss or matt applied to 1 or 2 sides of a stock. Cello Coated stock can be cut through without losing adhesion, unlike Lamination which must be sealed to itself around the edges of stock.
Center Spread	The two pages that face each other in the center of a book or publication.
Clipart	Graphic images, designs, and artwork in digital form that can be used in a digital document.
CMYK	The colour components for printing C = Cyan, M = Magenta, Y = Yellow, K = Black
Coated Stock	Any paper that has a mineral coating applied after the paper is made, giving the paper a smoother finish.
Coil Binding	Where a metal or plastic wire is spiraled through holes punched along the side of a stack of paper. Commonly used for reports, proposals and manuals. Documents bound with coil have the ability to lay flat and can rotate 360 degrees. Also called spiral binding.
Collate	To gather sheets together in their correct order.
Colour Bars	A colour test strip that is printed on the waste portion of a press sheet. It helps a press operator to monitor and control the quality of the printed material relative to ink density, registration and dot gain. It can also include a Star Target, which is designed to detect inking and press problems.
Colour Separating	The processes of separating the primary colour components (CMYK) for printing.
Colour Sequence	The order in which process inks are printed on a printing press. Also called the colour rotation or laydown sequence.
Colour Transparency	Transparent film containing a positive photographic colour image.
Comb Binding	Binding a stack of paper together by inserting the teeth of a flexible plastic comb into holes punched along one of the edges. Commonly used for catalogs, reports and manuals.
Contrast	The degree of tonal separation or gradation in the range from black to white.
Coverage	The extent to which printing ink covers the surface of a printed sheet. Ink coverage is frequently expressed as light, medium or heavy.
Crop marks	Small printed lines around the edges of a printed piece indicating where it is to be cut out of the sheet. Sometimes referred to as Cut Marks or Trim Marks.
Dampening	An essential part of the offset printing process whereby rollers distribute a solution to the plate that covers the non-printing area of the plate, repelling ink in those areas. Some newer presses use a waterless ink technology that does not use dampening.

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Densitometer	An optical device used by printers and photographers to measure and control the density of ink or colour.
Density	The degree of tone, weight of darkness or colour within a photo or reproduction measured by a densitometer.
Descender	A term that describes that portion of lower case letters that extends below the main body of the letter, as in "p".
Desktop Publishing	Creating materials to be printed using a personal computer, as opposed to taking non-electronic documents to a commercial printing company to be prepared for printing.
Die Cutting	The process of cutting paper in a shape or design by the use of a wooden die or block in which are positioned steel rules in the shape of the desired pattern.
Digital Proof	Colour separation data is digitally stored and then exposed to colour photographic paper creating a picture of the final product before it is actually printed with ink.
Dithering	The process of averaging between pixels of different colours. This results in a smoother, blended transition between the edge of two areas rather than a jagged or 'stair-step' appearance. Also a method used on ink jet printers where colours are produced by mixing colored dots in a randomized pattern.
Dpi	Dots per inch.
Dot gain	A term used to describe when dots are printing larger than they should.
Drill	The drilling of holes into paper for ring or comb binding.
Drop shadow	A shadow image placed offset behind an image to create the affect of the image lifting off the page.
Duotone	A two-colour halftone reproduction generated from a one colour photo.
Dye sublimation	A photographic looking colour print created by heating dyes on a substrate instead of using inks. Often used for proofing.
Electronic Proof	A process of generating a prepress proof in which paper is electronically exposed to the colour separation negatives and passed through electrically charged pigmented toners, which adhere electrostatically, resulting in the finished proof.
Embossing	The molding and reshaping of paper by the use of special metal dies and heat, counter dies and pressure, to produce a raised image on the paper surface.
EPS	Encapsulated Post Script. A standard file format used to transfer postscript formatting information between applications.
Foil Embossing	Stamping a thin sheet of metallic foil onto a sheet of paper and then embossing a pattern under it, creating a three dimensional raised area, usually text or an image.
Foil Stamping	Impressing metallic foil onto paper with a heated die.
Font	The characters which make up a complete typeface and size.
Ganging	The combining of two or more different printing projects on the same sheet of paper.

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Gate fold	A three or four panel fold where the two outside panels fold inward to meet in the center. In an open gate fold, there are three panels, the bottom of which is twice the size of the folded panels. In a closed gatefold, there are four panels of roughly equal size where the outer panels are folded inward together.
Grain	Paper fibers lie in a similar direction in a sheet of paper. This direction is called the grain. Printing is usually done so that if folding is required, the fold is done parallel to the grain.
Gripper	A series of metal fingers that hold each sheet of paper as it passes through a printing press.
Gripper Edge	The side of a piece of paper held by the gripper fingers as it passes through a printing press. Nothing can be printed in this area.
Gutter	A blank space or margin between components on a printed piece or press sheet.
Halftone	Using small dots to produce the impression of a continuous-tone image. The effect is achieved by varying the dot size and the number of dots per square inch.
Hickey	The effect that occurs when a spec of dust or debris (frequently dried ink) adheres to the printing plate and creates a spot or imperfection in the printing.
Image Area	That portion of a printing plate that carries ink and prints on paper.
Imposition	The correct sequential arrangement of pages that are to be printed, along with all the margins in proper alignment, before producing the plates for printing.
Ink Dry Back	When printed ink colours become lighter or less dense after they have dried on the paper.
Insert	A piece of printed material that is inserted into another piece of printed material, such as a magazine or catalog.
Jog	To vibrate a stack of finished pages so that they are tightly aligned for final trimming or binding.
Justification	Adjusting the spacing or hyphenation of words and characters to fill a given line of text from end to end. Sometimes referred to as word spacing.
Kerning	The narrowing of space between two letters so that they become closer and take up less space on the page.
Keyline	Lines that are drawn on artwork that indicate the exact placement, shape and size of elements including halftones, illustrations, etc.
Laid Finish	A parallel lined paper that has a handmade look.
Lamination	Applying thin transparent plastic sheets to both sides of a sheet of paper, providing scuff resistance, waterproofing and extended use.
Landscape	A document layout where the width is greater than the height. (the opposite of Portrait)
Layout	A rendition that shows the placement of all the elements, images, thumbnails etc., of a final printed piece.
Leading	Space between lines of type. The distance in points between one baseline and the next.

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Letterpress	Printing that utilizes inked raised surfaces, usually type, to create the image.
Letterspacing	The addition of space between typeset letters.
Line copy	Any copy that can be reproduced without the use of a halftone screen.
Linen	A paper that emulates the look and texture of linen cloth.
Lithography	The process of printing that utilizes flat or curved inked surfaces to create the printed images.
Logotype	A personalized type or design symbol for a company or product.
Loupe	A small magnifier used to observe the details on a printed sheet.
Make-ready	Paper that is used in the press set-up process before the printing run actually starts, or the process of setting up press or bindery equipment to produce a specific product, including setting paper size, ink density, image alignment, fold sizes, etc., in preparation for the actual production run.
Metallic Ink	Ink that looks metallic when printed. Made with powdered metal or pigments that look metallic. The most common colours used are gold and silver.
Moiré	An undesirable halftone pattern produced by the incorrect angles of overprinting halftone screens or from a scanned image that has been offset printed.
Mottle	A term used to describe spotty or uneven ink absorption.
Offset printing	The most commonly used printing method, where the printed material does not receive ink directly from a printing plate but from an intermediary blanket that receives the ink from the plate and then transfers it to the paper.
Offset paper	A term for sometimes used for uncoated book paper.
Opacity	Quality of papers that defines its opaqueness or ability to prevent two-sided printing from showing through.
Opaque ink	Ink that completely covers any ink under itself.
Overprinting	Any printing that is done on an area that has already been printed.
Overrun	Quantities of sheets printed over the requested number of copies.
Page Count	The total number of pages in a book, magazine or publication. Sometimes referred to as the extent or pp.
Pagination	The numbering of individual pages in a multi-page document when placed in spread order for printing (ie. an 8 page booklet would be pagenated 8,1,2,7,6,3,4,5)
Parchment	A hard finished paper that emulates animal skin used for documents, such as awards, that require writing by hand.
Perfect Binding	A binding process where the signatures of a book are held together by a flexible adhesive.
Perfecting Press	A printing press that prints on both sides of a sheet in a single pass through the press.
Pica	A typesetting unit of measurement equaling 1/6th of an inch.

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Picking	An occurrence in printing whereby the tack of ink pulls fibers or coating off the paper surface, leaving spots on the printed surface.
Plastic Comb	A method of binding books whereby holes are drilled on the spine, and a plastic grasping device is inserted to hold the pages together.
PMS	The abbreviation of the Pantone Colour Matching System.
Point	A measurement unit equal to 1/72 of an inch. 12 points to a pica, 72 points to an inch.
Portrait	A document layout in which the height is greater than the width. (the opposite of Landscape)
Post Script	A tradename of Adobe Systems, Inc. for its page description language. This language translates a digital file from an application into a language a compatible printer or other device can use to create its output.
Press Proof	Printed sample made on the press that a project will be printed on to show exactly how it will actually print using the paper, ink and plates to be used for the final press run.
Process Printing	A system where a colour image is separated into different colour values (cyan, magenta, yellow and black or CMYK) by the use of filters and screens or digitally with a software program and then transferred to printing plates and printed on a printing press, reproducing the original colour image.
Ream	500 sheets of paper.
Register	The arrangement of two or more printed images in exact alignment with each other.
Registration Marks	Any crossmarks or other symbols used on a press sheet to assure proper registration.
RGB	The colour space of Red, Green and Blue. These are the primary colours of light, which computers use to display images on your screen. An RGB computer file must be translated into the CMYK (the primary colours of pigment) colour space in order to be printed on a printing press.
Rich black	Using multiple ink colours in addition to black to produce a deep, dark black colour. Common CMYK values used are 30% Cyan, 20% Magenta, 20% Yellow and 100% Black.
Running Head	A title at the top of a page that appears on all pages of a book or chapter of a book.
Saddle Stitch	The binding of booklets or other printed materials by stapling the pages on the folded spine.
Scodix	A digitally applied clear or metallic resin that creates a raised area on a stock.
Scoring	To crease paper with a metal rule for the purpose of making folding easier.
Screen angles	The placement of halftone screens to avoid unwanted moiré patterns. Frequently used angles are black 45°, magenta 75°, yellow 90°, and cyan 105°.
Screen	A printed area of colour created by dots of a certain screen percentage instead of using a layer of solid ink. Frequently used to create a coloured area on the sheet, or tint the entire sheet instead of using coloured paper.
Scum	Unwanted deposits of ink in the non-image area of a printed piece.

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Self Cover	A cover that is the same paper stock as the internal sheets.
Show Through	When the printing on one side of a sheet is seen from the other side, a frequent problem with thin papers.
Side Guide	The guides on the sides of a printing press that consistently positions the sheet sideways as it is fed through the press.
Soy Inks	Inks made with soy oils instead of petroleum as the base. They are considered to be more environmentally friendly, a standard component of green printing.
Spiral bind	A type of binding where a metal or plastic wire is spiraled through holes drilled along the binding side of a document.
Spot UV	A process where a UV coated area is applied to stock in only a small specific area.
Stock	A term for unprinted paper. See paper type descriptions
Synthetic Ppapers	Any non-wood or cloth paper, usually petroleum (plastic) based.
Tint	A halftone screen that contains all the same sized dots, or a diluted variation of a full strength colour.
Trapping	The overlapping of one colour over a different, adjacent color to ensure that no white space is visible where the two colours meet, especially when there are slight variations in the registration of the two colours during the printing process. Or the process of printing wet ink over wet or dry previously printed ink.
Trim Size	The final size of a printed piece after being cut from the sheet of paper that it was printed on.
Tumble Head	A printing production format that has the front and back of a printed piece on one side of the paper, that is then printed the same on the back side, producing two copies of the piece.
Up	A term used to describe how many similar pieces can be printed on a larger sheet; two up, four up, etc.
UV Coating	A very shiny and durable high gloss coating applied to printed material. It is applied as a liquid then cured with ultraviolet light.
Variable Data Printing	Is a form of on-demand printing in which elements (such as text, graphics, photographs, etc) can be changed from one printed piece to the next, without stopping or slowing down the press, using information from a database. For example, a set of personalized letters, each with the same basic layout, can be printed with a different name and address on each letter.
Varnish	A clear coating added to printed material as a protective layer for improved scuff resistance and usually higher gloss.
Vellum	A finish of paper that is somewhat bulky and is slightly rough.
Verko Printing	A process where resin is applied to wet ink and heated to raise the ink. Also called raised printing. (not often used due to the newer, easier to use Scodix technology)
Vignette	A photo or illustration, in which the tones fade gradually away until they blend with the background they are printed on.
Washup	The procedure of cleaning a particular ink from the unit of a printing press.

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Watermark	A translucent mark or image that is embossed during the papermaking process, or printed onto paper, which is visible when the paper is held up to the light.
Web press	A printing press that prints on rolls of paper passed through the press in one continuous piece, as opposed to individual sheets of paper.
Widow	A single word or two left at the end of a paragraph, or a part of a sentence ending a paragraph, which loops over to the next page and stands alone. Also, the last sentence of a paragraph, which contains only one or two short words.
Wire Binding	A type of binding where a metal wire is clamped through holes punched along the binding side of a document.
Work and Turn	A printing production format that has the front and back of a printed piece on one side of the paper, that is then printed the same on the back side, producing two copies of the piece.
Wove	A smooth paper with a gentle patterned finish.