

Print ABCs



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Commercial Web Offset, Sheet Fed & Flexographic Printing Services

A

Absorbency: The ability of paper to absorb or take in liquids.

Acid-free paper: Paper manufactured on a paper machine with the wet-end chemistry controlled to a neutral or slightly alkaline pH.

Aqueous coating: A water-based coating applied after printing that gives an added glossy finish to the paper and helps prevent the underlying ink from dirt and damage.

B

Basis weight: The weight, in pounds, of a ream (500 sheets) of paper cut to a standard size. Each major paper grade, like cover, bond or offset, has its own basic sheet size, which determines its basis weight.

Binding: Fastening papers together for easy reading, transport and protection. Papers may be bound together with a variety of materials, like wire, thread, glue and plastic combs.

Bit-mapped fonts: Fonts created in a graphic mode that describes an image made of pixels, where the pixel is either on (black) or off (white).

Bleed: Printing that extends beyond the trim edge of a page. To print a bleed, the piece is printed on oversized paper, which is trimmed after printing.

Brightness: The light-reflecting property of paper in comparison with a standard reference. Paper brightness affects the legibility and contrast of printing.

C

C1S: Paper with coating on one side only.

C2S: Paper with coating on both sides.

CMYK: An abbreviation for the four primary colors used in four-color process printing: cyan, magenta, yellow and black.

Coated paper: Paper with a surface coating imparting a smooth finish. Coated paper finishes have a higher opacity and better ink holdout than uncoated papers.

Coating: An emulsion, varnish or lacquer applied over a printed surface to protect it. Also see Aqueous coating and Varnish.

Color separation: Also see Process color separation.

Colorfastness: The property of paper in which color won't run when wet and won't fade in bright light.

Cover papers: Strong, heavy papers, suitable for covers of publications, such as booklets or catalogs. Also used for brochures, business cards and postcards.

Cropping: The cutting out of extraneous parts of an image, usually a photograph.

D

Density: The specific weight of paper per unit volume. Density directly relates to the paper's absorbency, stiffness, opacity and resiliency.

Digital color printing: Also known as direct-to-plate technology. A printing process that allows color printing directly from an electronic file without the need for film or color separations.

Digital Dylux: A type of low resolution hard copy proof that allows you to assure proper imposition, folding and stitching, but is not used for checking color accuracy.

Direct-to-plate technology: Also known as digital color printing. A technology that allows for color printing directly from an electronic file without the need for film or color separations.

Display type: Large and/or decorative type used for headlines and as graphic elements in display pieces. Common sizes range between 14 and 72 point.

Dots-per-inch (dpi): The measurement used to indicate how many dots or pixels appear within a vertical and horizontal inch of a graphic. This measurement is used to define the quality of an image's resolution.

Duotone: a halftone image printed with two colors, one dark and the other lighter. The same photograph is halftoned twice, using the same screen at two different angles. Combining the two improves the detail and contrast in the final printed image.

E

Embossing: An impression of an image in relief to achieve a raised surface on paper.

EPS (Encapsulated PostScript): A vector graphic file format.

F

Finish: The surface contour and characteristics of paper measurable by smoothness, gloss, absorbency and print quality.

Foil-stamping: A process wherein a thin, flexible sheet of metal or plastic is used to cover an area of a printed page.

Folding: The process by which a press sheet is folded. There are a wide variety of folding options. To see examples of these, go to the trade tips folding options page.

Font: A set of characters in a specific typeface, at a specific point size and in a specific style.

Four-color process: A printing process that uses a layering of four primary ink colors (cyan, magenta, yellow and black) to reproduce color images.

G

Gatefold: Two or more parallel folds on a sheet of paper with the end flaps folding inward.

Ghosting: An offset printing defect characterized by the appearance of faint replicas of printed images in undesirable places in one of two ways. **Mechanical ghosting** is characterized by the appearance of a "phantom" image on the printed side of the sheet. **Chemical ghosting** is characterized by a "phantom" image on the reverse side of the sheet originating from the sheet below it.

GIF (Graphic Interchange Format): An imaging standard that uses pixels to recreate an image electronically, often used for animation.

Gloss: A paper's shine or luster.

Gripper edge: The leading edge of paper as it passes through a printing press.

Grippers: The metal fingers in a sheet-fed press that hold the paper in place as it travels through the press.

H

Halftone: In traditional publishing, a continuous tone image photographed through a screen in order to create small dots of varying sizes that can be reproduced on a printing press. Digital halftones are produced by sampling a continuous tone image and assigning different numbers of dots, which simulate different sized dots, for the same effect.

Heavy coverage: Refers to the heavy use of inks on a printed piece, such as large areas of solid color.

I**J**

JPEG (Joint Photographic Experts Group): An electronic proof and digital form of presenting images good for showing photographs on a computer monitor. The images will be very clear on a monitor, but do not translate well to printing.

K**L**

Laid finish: A paper with a translucent pattern of lines running both parallel to and across the grain.

Light coverage: Refers to the amount of ink used on a printed piece. Light coverage generally does not include extensive areas of solid color.

Linen finish: A paper finish that is similar to the texture of linen fabric. Linen finishes are embossed after the paper comes off the paper machine.

M

Make-ready: All the activities involved in preparing a printing press for a print run, such as setting the registration, balancing the color and adjusting the plates and blankets for paper thickness.

Match print proof: A high resolution hard copy proof made from the negatives that will be used to make the plates for the printing press. This proof is a good way to check color accuracy.

Matte finish: Coated papers with little or no gloss. A matte coated sheet is often specified when the printed pages will contain a lot of type, since the low gloss makes for easier reading.

Moiré: A pattern created by printing several repetitive designs on top of each other. In four-color process printing, four screens of colored dots print on top of each other. If the angles of the halftone screens of each of the four colors are not properly aligned with each other, an undesirable, blurry pattern, called moiré, appears in the final image.

N**O**

Offset paper: Paper that contains the quality characteristics needed in order to withstand the rigors of offset presses.

Opacity: A property of paper that minimizes the show-through of printing from the opposite side or the adjacent sheet. Opacity is influenced by the paper's weight, brightness and type of fiber.

P

Pantone®: the company who makes the Pantone® Matching System, a standard color-matching system used by printers and graphic designers for inks, papers and other materials. A PMS color is a standard color defined by percentage mixtures of different primary inks.

PDF (Portable Document File): A low resolution electronic proofing method produced using Adobe Acrobat.

Perfect binding: A binding technique in which single sheets are stacked together and the binding edge is ground to create a rough surface. An adhesive is applied to the binding edge and a cover is wrapped around the pages.

Pictro proof: A type of hard copy proof made in cases where direct-to-plate technology is being used for the press. This high-resolution proofing method is a good way to check color accuracy.

Pixel (picture element): the smallest spot of phosphor on a display monitors that can be lit up on a screen.

Plate: Short for printing plate, this is generally a thin sheet of metal that carries the printing image. The plate surface is treated or configured so that only the printing image is ink receptive.

PMS: See **Pantone®**.

PNG (Portable Network Graphics): An electronic method for displaying a portable bitmap image.

Printer font: high-resolution bitmaps or font outline masters used for the actual laying down of the characters on the printed page, as opposed to display on the screen.

Process color separation: The process used to reproduce color images by creating and superimposing halftone dots from the four basic colors: cyan, magenta, yellow and black.

Proof: A representation of the printed piece, created either electronically or in print, that demonstrates what has been produced in the film or plate procedures.

Q

R

RGB: The color space commonly used for computer monitors and that divides color into the three primary colors of light: red, green and blue.

Recycled content paper: A paper product containing some, but consisting of less than 100% recovered fiber.

Recycled paper: A paper product consisting of 100% recovered fiber. Recovered fiber includes pre- or post-consumer sources or both.

Resolution: The quality of graphics in relation to the number of dots-per-inch or pixels the graphic has. A high resolution graphic has more dots-per-inch (dpi) and a low resolution graphic has a lower dpi.

S

Saddle-stitching: A binding process for newsletter, booklet or catalogs in which the folded sheets, or signatures, of paper are gathered together one inside the other, placed over a "saddle," and stitched or stapled along the spine with wire. Saddle-stitched books will lie flat when open but may contain only a limited number of pages.

Scaling: Reduction or enlargement of artwork, which can be proportional (most frequently used) or disproportional. In desktop publishing, optimal scaling of bitmaps is reduction or enlargement that will avoid or reduce moiré patterns.

Scoring: A mechanical means of pressing a channel into a sheet of paper to facilitate folding while guarding against cracking the paper. Scoring is typically used when heavyweight papers are folded.

Screen (tint): A uniform dotted fill pattern, described in a percentage, such as 50% screen.

Screen font: Low-resolution bitmaps of type characters that show the positioning and size of characters on a computer screen.

Self-cover: A printed booklet, catalog or other piece where the paper stock used for the cover pages is the same as that used for the text.

Show-through: Printing that is seen by looking through a sheet of paper that is not adequately opacified.

Smoothness: The rate of flatness and evenness on the surface of a sheet of paper.

T

Thickness: The thickness of a single piece of paper, as measured in thousandths of an inch, called "caliper." Thickness measurements define the bulkiness of a sheet of paper.

Trapping: A thin line created where two color that are printing side-by-side are overlapped to help keep the press in register and avoid a white gap between the two colors.

TIFF (Tagged Image File Format): a bitmap graphic file format.

Trim size: The size of the printed sheet of page once it has been trimmed.

Trimming: Cutting paper after printing to make all sheets the same or a specified size.

U

Uploading: A form of file transfer in which files from one computer are uploaded to a designated server site. This technique can be used for files up to 5 MB.

UV coating: A very slick, glossy coating applied to the printed paper surface and dried on press with ultraviolet light. The slick surface of UV coating makes it eye catching and popular for printing covers on paperback novels.

V

Varnish: A thin protective coating applied like an ink on printed material. It is used on glossy papers to protect against dirt and damage.

W

Waterproof: A high resolution, hard copy proof similar to a Match print. This proof is a good way to check for color accuracy.

Wove paper: Paper having a uniform unlined surface and a soft, smooth finish.

X

Y

Z



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