

glossary of printing & computer graphics terminology



Adage Design

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A

Accordion fold

A type of old with two or more parallel panels that result in a sheet opening like an accordion; also known as Z fold

Against the grain

Perpendicular to the direction of the grain of the paper

Aliasing

A jagged effect which occurs when a graphic image has low resolution

Anti-aliasing

Technique of reducing or eliminating the jagged lines on a low resolution image by filling in the edges to make it appear smoother

Aqueous Coating

A fast-drying, water-based coating that is applied like ink after printing to protect and enhance the appearance of a printed product

Artwork

In printing, this is the material which includes all text, graphics, photos and illustrations

B

Back up

To print the reverse side of a printed sheet

Bind

To secure and fasten sheets or pages into books or booklets

Binding

The process by which pages are secured together with the use of wire, thread, glue, staples, etc

Bindery

The department in a printing company which performs finishing operations on a printed product such as cutting, trimming, collating, stitching, folding, etc

Bitmap

Rows and columns of dots or pixels that form an image making up a graphic image

Bitmap Images

Computerized image represented by a dots or pixels; also known as raster images

Blanket

The thick rubber pad applied to a cylinder of an offset printing press that receives and transfers ink from the plate onto paper

Bleed

Printing that extend beyond the edge of a page

Blind embossing

A technique in which a raised impression is created on paper without ink or foil

Bond paper

Strong lightweight paper commonly used for letters and business forms

Border

Margin or outline around an image or a paper's edge

Brightness

The degree of light reflecting from a sheet of paper that affects contrast in printing

Bulk

The thickness of paper in relation to its weight

C

C1S

Short for coating on one side of paper

C2S

Short for coating on both sides of paper

Caliper

Measurement of paper thickness expressed in thousandths of an inch

Camera-ready copy

Artwork that has all elements ready for printing

Cast coated

A type of coated paper pressure dried producing a hard gloss finish

Chrome

Colour transparency

Coated paper

Paper with a thin surface coating

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applied to give a smooth finish

Collate

To arrange pages or sheets in a specific order before binding

Colour Balance

The correct ratio of cyan, magenta, and yellow ink to produce the desired colour

Colour bar

Rows of colour patches printed in the trim area used by printers to check colour accuracy and density

Colour correction

Altering colour qualities such as colour balance, contrast, etc to improve colour tones

Colour filter

Filters used in colour separation

Colour key

A printer's proof made from negative overlays which when combined simulates process printing inks

Colour matching system

Colour swatches used to compare, identify and match colours

Colour separations

The 4 colour negatives made when a continuous tone image is converted and filtered into the 4 process colours (cyan, magenta, yellow, black)

Colour Sequence

The order in which the four-colour process inks are printed on the press

Colourimeter

A light sensitive device used for measuring colour values in a way similar to the human eye

Comb bind

A method of binding by sliding over a plastic comb through holes punched along the side of the pages

Composite film

Combination of images from one or more negatives or films

Computer-to-Plate (CTP)

A technology that enables a plate to be directly imaged from the computer instead of using the

conventional film plate to expose the image to the plate

Continuous-tone copy

Illustrations and photographs that have a range of black, white, and gray tones

Contrast

The range of difference between the darkest and lightest areas of an image

Copy

Any material - text or artwork- to be used in printing a piece

Cover stock

A heavyweight paper used for its durability; preferred stock for postcards, covers, posters, folders and business cards

Creep

In saddle-stitched binding, a creep refers to the inside sheets that stick out further than the pages that enclose it.

Crop

To trim one side or sides an image

Crop marks

Lines at the margin of a sheet that indicate where the page will be trimmed

Crossover

An image that spans two facing pages, crossing over the binding

Cure

Drying inks or coatings after printing to develop strong adhesion

Cyan

A shade of greenish blue; also known as process blue; It is one of four basic ink colours used in CMYK or full colour printing process

D

Deboss

To print an image on paper by pressing the front surface resulting in a sunken appearance

Densitometer

An instrument used to measure the density of ink and determine ink coverage

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Density

Degree of lightness or darkness of a colour

Diazo

A light-sensitive chemical used as coating on paper, film, or press plates

Die

Metal plate cut used for cutting, stamping or embossing images

Die cutting

A process of putting a shape or design on paper using metal dies

Direct Imaging

A technology that directly transfers an image to a press plates from a digital file, eliminating the use of film plates

Direct Imaging Press (DI)

An offset press where the plate is imaged directly on the press with laser

Dot

Single identifiable element of an image; also referred to as a "pixel"

Dot gain or spread

An occurrence when dots print larger than they were on the plate or film

Dots Per Inch (DPI)

A measurement of resolution of a screen image or printed image defined by the number of dots that fit horizontally and vertically into one inch; The higher the DPI, the sharper the image

Double burn

Using multiple negatives to burn one image onto a print

Draw-down

A thin coating or smear of ink on paper used to determine and approve colours before printing

Drop-out

Parts of artwork that are not reproduced

Dummy

A mock layout of a copy used to show how a finished product should appear

Duotone

A halftone image made up of two

colours – black and white

Duplexing

The ability of a press to print on both sides of a sheet without turning the sheet over

E

Emboss

Technique of pressing an image into paper to create a 3D or raised effect

Emulsion

Photosensitive coating on printing plates and photographic film

Encapsulated Postscript File (EPS)

An Adobe graphic file format that can contain both vector and bitmap images

F

Feeder

Section of a printing press that separates the sheets and feeds them into position for printing

Flood

To print an entire sheet completely with ink or varnish

Flop

Reversing a negative to make the image on the right side appear on the left

Foil

A thin metal film with a dry pigment applied to paper by heat or pressure; used in foil stamping and foil embossing

Foil emboss

To foil stamp or emboss an image on paper using a die

Foil stamping

Printing an image on paper without ink using a foil and heated metal die

Four colour process printing

The process of printing by separating the colour components of an image - cyan, magenta, yellow and black – which when combined reproduces full colour images

Four over Four (4/4)

A print job with four colour printing on both sides of the paper

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Four over One (4/1)

A print job with four colour printing on the front side and one colour (usually black) on the back side

Four over Zero (4/0)

A print job with four colour printing on the front side and no printing on the back side

G

Gang

Printing of multiple images on the same sheet during a single press run

Ghosting

A unwanted faint image that appears on a printed sheet

Gloss

A coating applied to paper that provides higher light reflection resulting in a shiny appearance

Grain

In paper, the direction in which the fibers lie during manufacturing

Graphic Design

The art of using visual elements to convey a message

Grayscale

An image made up of gray tones ranging from black to white

Grippers

The metal fingers on printing presses that holds and pulls the paper as it passes through the press

H

Halftone

A continuous tone image made up of a pattern of dots

Hard copy

The printed output of a document or image on paper or film

Hickey

A spot or a small white circle with ink in the center on a printed sheet caused by dust or dirt

Highlight

The lightest are of in a photograph or image

House Sheet

Paper kept in stock by a printer that can be used for various printing jobs

I

Image area

Area of a page that can be printed on

Imposition

Arranging printed pages on a press sheet so they will be folded and trimmed in the correct order

Impression

The pressure of a printing press on paper; image caused by pressure of a press plate on paper

Indicia

Imprint in the upper right corner of the mail indicating postage information or payment

Ink fountain

The reservoir on a printing press that holds and supplies the ink

K

Keyline

An outline drawing to show the placement, content and estimate size of an artwork

L

Laid finish

A ribbed pattern made up of translucent horizontal and vertical lines

Line copy

Pictures without halftones consisting only of black and white; also called line art

Lines per inch (LPI)

The number of lines of dots per inch in a halftone screen; the higher the LPI., the finer the image detail

Lithography

A method of printing where the image areas of a surface accept ink and non-image areas repel ink.

M

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Magenta

A shade of bluish-red; also known as process red; one of the 4 basic ink colours in process CMYK or full colour printing

Mask

Using an opaque material to block parts of an image from light exposure, also called knockout

Matte

Flat non-gloss paper finish

Micrometer

Instrument used to determine paper thickness or caliper

Middle tones

Tonal values of a photograph or image between highlights and shadows; must be balanced for accurate reproduction

Moire Pattern

An undesirable pattern that occurs when screen patterns overlap due to incorrect screen alignment or angles

N

Negative

A film which reverses the white and black areas of the original image

O

Offset Lithography or Offset Printing

A common printing process in which an inked image is transferred from a metal plate to a rubber blanket which in turn presses the image onto paper

Offsetting

Transfer of ink from one side of a page to the side of an opposite page

Opacity

The property of paper that refers to how much it can block the ink from showing through

Outline halftone

A halftone image with the background removed from around the subject

Overrun

The quantity of prints produced is more than the ordered quantity

Oversampling

Scanning at more than the ideal sampling rate

P

Page count

Total number of pages in a book or publication

Pantone Matching Systems (PMS)

A registered name for a colour-matching system used by printers and graphic designers to compare and identify ink colours

Perfect Bind

Binding method where pages are held together by grinding down the book's binding edge and coating it with glue and then attaching it to a cover with adhesive

Perfecting press

A printing press that prints both sides of a sheet at the same time

Perforation

A series of cuts or holes on a sheet to make tearing easy

Pica

A unit of measure used in the graphic and print industry; 1 pica = 1/6 of an inch

Plate

A flat sheet of metal that holds the image reproduced during printing

PostScript

A page description language developed by Adobe Systems used for printing documents on laser printers and other output devices

Press Layout

See Ruleup

Pressure-sensitive paper

Paper material with three layers – the liner, adhesive and facstock; the adhesive on the facstock lets it stick to a surface when the liner is removed and pressure is applied

Process colours

Process of producing colour images with a full range of colours by combining 4 basic colours -: Cyan (blue), magenta (process red), yellow (process yellow), black (process black)

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R

Raster

To convert a digital data into pixel maps

Raster image

Also called bitmap image; a graphic made up of pixels or dots

Raster Image Processor (RIP)

A hardware device or program that translates commands into bitmapped info needed by a printer or output device

Ream

500 sheets of paper

Resolution

Refers to the number of pixels or dots in an image expressed in pixels per inch (ppi) or dots per inch (dpi) that represents the output quality of an image

RGB

Stands for red, green, blue - the additive primary colours used to display colour in video and computer monitors

Rich Black

A darker and deeper black colour achieved by combining other ink colours with black ink. The values to create Rich Black is usually 40% Cyan, 30% Magenta, 30% Yellow, 100% Black

Ruleup

A drawing that shows how a printing job must be done with a specific press and sheet size; also called Press Layout

S

Saddle stitch

To bind where the pages are stitched through from the outside using wire staples

Scanner

A device that can output text and graphics from a physical image to digital data

Score

A crease made on paper to allow it to fold easier and accurately

Scoring

Creating a crease in a straight line to a sheet of paper for easy and accurate folding

Screen angles

The angles at which halftone screens must be placed to avoid moire patterns

Self-cover

A product with the same stock used for the cover and text pages

Shadow

The darkest area in a photograph or image

Side stitch

To bind by inserting staples into the sheets from the front through to the back

Signature

Refers to a printed sheet once it has been folded

Specifications

A precise description of the features of a product such as paper grade, paper size, print quantity, folding, and others; also known as specs

Spine

The bound edge at the back of a book

Split Run

Binding of printed publication in two different ways

Spoilage

Damaged and unusable printed product

Spot varnish

Varnishing paper on a specific area

Stamping

Using a die to press a design or image onto a sheet

Step-and-repeat

Repeated exposure of an image on the plate to form a pattern

Stock

The paper or material to be printed on

Stripping

Assembling of films for plate

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making, now mostly done electronically

Substrate
Any stock or material on which printing is done

T

Tagged Image File Format (.TIFF)
A standard graphics file format developed by Aldus, Adobe, and Apple popularly used for storing high resolution bitmap images

Tint
Colour mixed with white

Tissue overlay
A thin translucent paper placed over art boards used to mark areas and write notes

Trapping
Overlapping of adjacent colours or ink to prevent gaps from showing

Tree-free
Pulp or paper made from other resources other than trees like hemp or cotton

Trim marks
Marks on a printed sheet to show where page will be trimmed or cut

Trim size
The final or finished size of a printed sheet

Typesetting
To arrange or layout copy for printing

U

Uncoated paper
Paper manufactured with no coating on the surface

Under run
The quantity of prints produced is less than the ordered quantity

Up
Printing multiple copies of the same on the same sheet

UV coating
A liquid protective coating applied to a print, bonded and cured with ultraviolet light

V

Varnish
A thin liquid protective coating applied to a product for protection to enhance appearance

Vignette
Image with the background gradually fading to white

Vector Images
Scalable images or graphics made up of lines and curves instead of dots or pixels

W

Wash up
Cleaning of ink on a printing press for a different ink to be applied

Waste
Damaged or unusable paper at the press or bindery

Watermark
A design impressed on paper during paper manufacturing

Web
Roll of paper used on a web press

Web press
A high speed printing press that print on a large continuous roll of paper called a "web" instead on individual sheets

Wire O
A method of binding using double loops of wire through a hole

With the grain
Feeding paper into the press parallel to the grain direction of the paper

Work and tumble
Printing on the second side of a sheet by turning the sheet over from front to rear

Wove paper
A paper with an even and a smooth finish

Z

Z fold
A bindery term for two or more parallel folds that result in a sheet that opens like an accordion; also

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known as an accordion fold.

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