

# A-Z of Print Jargon

To help you understand more about the print process here is a quick reference guide to the terminology.

## A

**A sizes** - A range of paper sizes.

**Absorption** - The first stage of drying of an ink when printed.

**Accordion Fold** - Two or more parallel folds like an accordion.

**Acid-Free Paper** - Paper which does not contain acid.

**Art Paper** - Paper which has received a special coating to give it a smooth gloss finish.

## B

**B sizes** - A range of paper sizes.

**Back-up** - To print on the reverse side of a printed sheet.

**Bale** - Solid, compressed stacks of pulp or paper sheets.

**Binding Methods** - Methods of securing the leaves of a book or brochure.

**Blanket** - Conveys the image from a plate to a sheet of paper.

**Bleed** - The part of an image that extends beyond the 'Trim Marks' on a page.

**Blind Embossed** - A logo, text or design which has been relief stamped into a sheet of paper or board.

**Boards** - Paper weight beyond a certain weight (usually over 170gsm commonly used for business cards).

**Bromide** - A black and white proof on photographic paper.

**Bulk** - The substance, feel and thickness of a paper.

**Bulky Paper** - Paper which seems to be thick in relation to its weight.

## C

**Carbon Paper** - A thin wood free, or part mechanical, paper coated on one side with colouring agent of carbon. It is transferred to a sheet of paper underneath when pressure is applied.

**Chromalin** - A registered trade mark of Agfa. An accurate colour proof that is made from imaged film using a powder instead of ink.

**CMYK** - Letters which stand for Cyan, Magenta, Yellow and Black (K). K is used for black to eliminate confusion with blue. Full colour printed images are made up of these component colours.

**Coated Paper Material** - Coated on one or both sides with a mixture of china clay and latex to fill up surface pits and improve the printing surface.

**Coating** - A special water based coating which is applied to printed matter to protect literature from ink smudging or finger marking or to enhance appearance. The main types are sealer, gloss, matt and silk. Coatings are commonly used on matt or silk-coated paper as these types are more prone to smudging than gloss coated paper. The main difference between a varnish and a coating is that coatings are faster drying and therefore jobs can be turned around quicker.

**Colour Separation** - Division of colour into basic elements e.g. CMYK or flat pantone by a process of scanning or page make-up from a computer. Separate printing plates are needed for each colour.

**CTP** - Computer-to-press technology, which does not need printing plates.

The computer transfers the images directly to the print-form-cylinder.

**Copy** - Any text that is intended for eventual reproduction in electronic or printed form.

**Creasing** - An indentation made in thick paper to prevent cracking.

**Crop Marks** - Small lines that show the document edge essential for register and trim.

**Cyan** - A shade of blue used in four-colour printing.

## D

**Damping** - The process of applying water to the lithographic plate on a lithographic printing machine.

**Damping Roller** - The roller on a printing press which applies the moisture directly to the printing plate.

**Debossing** - Printing or stamping in which dies are used to depress an image below the surface of paper or board.

**Densitometer** - A digital precision instrument used to measure the quantitative colours or density in colour work.

**Die Stamping** - To cut paper, card or board to a particular size and design with a metal die, for packaging and display work.

**DL Envelope** - A standard envelope size measuring 110mm x 220mm.

**Dot** - The basic element of halftone.

**Dot Gain** - An aberration when during the making of halftone film or plates, the dots become slightly enlarged Per Inch. For calculating resolution.

**Double Page Spread** - Two facing pages of a publication.

**Double Coating** - Coating paper or board twice on one side or both sides.



**Drop Shadow** - A shadow behind an image or type to help bring the image forward and make it stand out.  
**D.T.P. (Desktop Publishing)** - The creation of artwork and print from your computer.  
**Duct** - The ink reservoir in a printing machine.  
**Dummy** - The prototype of a brochure or book in the correct size, layout and, if required, paper.  
**Duotone** - A photograph printed using two colours.

## E

**Editing** - Analysing and amending a manuscript, composition, audio or visual item before publishing.  
**Embossing** - Relief printing or stamping in which metal dies are used to raise an image above the surface of paper or board.  
**Encapsulation** - A fully sealed polyester or polypropylene film to both surfaces of a sheet

## F

**Fan-a-part** - Glue used to hold NCR sets together  
**Feeder Equipment** - For feeding and positioning paper sheets in printing presses.  
**Fit** - The alignment and registration of individual images or plates within a page.  
**Finishing** - All operations after printing.  
**Folio** - Page numbers.  
**Font** - All the letters, numbers, punctuation marks and symbols required for a particular style and size of typeface.  
**Format** - The physical characteristics of a publication such as size, shape, typefaces, margin widths, letter spacing, colours, paper stock, etc. **Four Colour Process** - A method of printing in full colour by colour separation producing four colour plates for printing in cyan, magenta, yellow and black.  
**French Fold** - A sheet of paper that has been printed on one side only and then folded twice to form an uncut four-page section.

## G

**Gatefold** - A paper fold.  
**Gathering** - Placing the sections of a book in the correct order for binding.  
**Ghosting** - An image which appears as a lighter area on a subsequent print due to local blanket depressions from previous image areas.  
**GIF (Graphics Interchange Format)** - another compression method, are the most commonly used image file formats on the internet  
**Gloss** - Gloss refers to the reflectivity of paper or of the printed matter on it.  
**Graduation** - The smooth transition from one tone or colour to another, or the range of values between black and white.  
**Grain** - The pattern of fibres in a manufactured sheet of paper.  
**Graphic** - Computer data in the form of a picture or image.  
**Grid** - A rectangular page pattern that facilitates precise positioning of text, illustrations and white space.  
**Gripper** - On printing presses these are fingers that keep the sheet in place and carry it during the impression.  
**Gripper Edge** - The edge, which is caught by the grippers, as a sheet of paper is fed into a press.  
**GSM** - Grammes per square metre  
**Grammage** - Unit of measurement used to measure paper weight (and so thickness) in printing.  
**Guillotine** - A machine used to cut or trim a large number of sheets of paper accurately.  
**Gutter** - The inside edge of a page that allows extra space for binding.

## H

**Halftone** - Process by which continuous tone is simulated by a pattern of dots of varying size.  
**Hard Copy** - Paper printout of computer data.  
**Hexachrome** - This is a colour system that uses a set of six inks, made up of a modified four-colour set plus orange and green. The objective of hexachrome is to improve the printed colour gamut.  
**Hickey** - A spot on a printed sheet caused by dust, lint or ink imperfections. It is particularly noticeable on solids or halftones.

## I

**I.B.C.** - Inside Back Cover  
**I.F.C.** - Inside Front Cover  
**Impose or Imposition** - To arrange pages so that when the sheet is folded the text will read continuously.  
**Impression Cylinder** - A cylinder of a printing press which supports one surface of the sheet or web while the other surface receives its printed image from the blanket cylinder  
**Ink Duct** - The fountain supplying the ink to the printing press.  
**Inking Roller** - A printing machine roller that carries ink from the fountain to the plate.  
**Ivory Board** - High quality board made in white or colours with a bright, clear appearance particularly used for invitations and other quality printed material.

## J

**JPEG (pronounced jay-peg)** - Stands for Joint Photographic Experts Group. JPEG is a colour image compression technique that reduces file sizes by eliminating redundant or unnecessary image data. Many digital cameras automatically save images using the JPEG format. JPEG and  
**Justify** - Aligning type to the right edge of a column as well as the left.

## K

**Knocking up** - The adjustment on one or two edges of a pile of sheets so that they can be cut squarely.

## L

**Laminate** - To protect paper or card and give it a matt or gloss surface by applying a transparent plastic coating through heat or pressure.  
**Laid Paper** - Printing or writing paper with a ribbed appearance  
**Lay Edges** - The edges of a sheet which are placed flush with the side and marks on a printing press to ensure that the sheet will be held properly by the grippers and have uniform margins when printed.  
**Layout Overall** - Design of a piece of printed work. A sketch that shows the relative positions of headlines, body text and pictures as they should appear on the finished item.  
**Leading** - The space between lines of type on a page.  
**Letter Count** - The average number of characters to a line.  
**Light Table** - A special table with a light underneath used for paste-ups.  
**Lithography** - Printing from a dampened, flat surface using greasy ink based on the principle of the mutual repulsion of oil and water.  
**Logo** - The identifying symbol or trademark of an organization, publication, or other concern.



## M

**Machine Proof** - A proof of the job from the printing press.

**Magenta** - The name of the shade of red from the standard four colour printing inks.

**Manilla Paper** - Formally produced from manilla hemp but now produced from softwood kraft pulp.

**Matt Art** - A clay coated printing paper with a dull finish.

**Metallic Ink** - A printing ink, which produces an effect of gold, silver, bronze or copper.

**Moisture Content** - The amount of moisture in paper. It is expressed as a percentage of its weight. Typically, a moisture content of around 7-8% is recommended for printing on paper.

**Monochrome** - An image made up of varying tones in one colour (also duotone)

**Mottle** - The appearance of irregular spots or blotches in a printed area that should be even in colour.

## N

**NCR** - No Carbon Required. Common name for carbonless paper.

**Negative** - Film that has been exposed and processed to fix a reverse tone or image.

**Newsprint** - The low grade paper used for printing newspapers and wrapping fish and chips.

**Numbering** - Printing a unique number on a job (i.e. tickets, coupons).

## O

**OBC** - Outside Back Cover

**OCR** - Optical character recognition

**Offset Lithography** - A method of lithography by which the image is not printed direct from the plate but offset first onto a rubber covered cylinder, the blanket that performs the printing operation.

**Opacity** - Description of non-transparency in printing papers.

**OPI** - A process in which low resolution files are replaced automatically by high resolution files at pre-press stage.

**Original** - Any matter or image intended for reproduction

**Overprint** - Printing over an already printed area.

## P

**Page Proof Reproduction** - Proof of a single page.

**Pagination** - The term given to numbering the pages of a book.

**Pantone Matching System** - A registered trade name, system of colour matching used in computer software, paper and inks.

**Perfecting** - Printing the second side of a sheet simultaneously (backing up).

**Perforate** - Broken slotted cuts or rules to enable the paper to be torn in the correct place.

**PDF (Portable Document Format)** - A file format developed by Adobe that displays documents identically on any computer system

**Plate** - A sheet of metal holding the image from which an impression is produced.

**Plate Cylinder** - The cylinder that holds the inked printing plate in position.

**Platesetter** - A machine where the printing plate is produced directly from data without the need for film.

**Point** - A typesetting unit of measure used for indicating font sizes.

**Pre Print** - Low moisture content paper suitable for pre print and high speed laser

**Pre Press** - The procedures that a manuscript or publication goes through prior to printing.

**Press Run** - In the printing of a job, the total number of copies produced in one printing.

**Print Run** - The total number of finished copies of a publication that will result from a set series of individual print jobs

**Process Colours** - The printing inks Cyan, Magenta, Yellow and Black

**Proof** - Composed copy for editing that has already gone through one or more of the prepress procedures.

**Pulp** - The basic material used in papermaking.

## R

**RIP (Raster Image Processing)** - Making the dots that make up a halftone from a page description language such as postscript.

**Ream** - 500 sheets of paper of the same size, quality and grammage.

**Reel** - A continuous length of paper wound on a core, irrespective of diameter, width or weight.

**Register** - The accurate positioning of images on a sheet using register marks.

**Register Marks** - A set of fine line crosses or other suitable devices added to original artwork to provide reference points for accurate subsequent multi-colour printing or finishing.

**Resolution** - The sharpness of a computer image measured in D.P.I.

**Reversed Out Printing** - White text (or coloured) reversed out of a background of solid colour.

**Rule** - A vertical or horizontal line on a page.

**Runnability** - The ability of a paper or board to perform on a printing press without problems.

## S

**Saddle Stitch or Wire** - A method of stitching brochures in which they are opened over a saddle shaped support and stitched through the back.

**Satin Finish** - A smooth finished paper with a sheen to the surface.

**Scanner** - An electronic device for converting hard copy into digital copy, usually in the form of an image.

**Score** - A crease made in paper or card so that folding will not damage it.

**Screen** - A screen is a thin transparent film onto which is printed a very fine matrix. A screen enables a continuous tone image such as a photograph or transparency, which cannot be reproduced by most printing process, to be broken down into tiny dots which can be printed and which from a normal viewing distance give the illusion of continuous tone. Screens are also used to print tints of solid colours by altering the size or spacing of the dots. Screens are referred to in terms of DPI (dots per inch) or dots per centimetre and the finer the screen, the better the quality of reproduction.

**Screen Ruling** - The number of lines per inch (or centimetre) on a halftone or tint screen, equal to the number of dots per inch on the printed image.

**Section** - A sheet folded to create four or more book pages.

**Set-Off** - Term for the unwanted transfer of printing ink from a printed sheet to a surface facing it.

**Sheet** - A single sheet of paper.

**Sheet Fed** - A printing press into which sheets are fed.

**Short-Run** - A small-quantity print specification for a publication.

**Sidebar** - Extra information about an article's subject matter that is given prominence by means of a separate panel.

**Side Perfs** - A perforated line running down the sides of a form.

**Specs** - Specifications; parameters or rules for formatting a publication, application, document etc.



**Spot Colour** - A colour that is printed not using four colour printing, but printed using self-coloured inks such as Pantone.

**Swatch** - A colour specimen.

## T

**Text** - The main body of an article in a publication.

**TCM (Total Colour Management)** - Colour management of inks supplied by Stalin inks.

**Thermography** - The process in which new printed sheets are dusted with a resin powder, which forms a raised surface when fused with heat.

**Tint** - The effect of the mixture of white to a solid colour or the effect achieved by breaking up colour into a percentage using dots, which allow white paper to show through.

**Trim Marks** - Marks incorporated on a printed sheet, which indicate where the paper is to be cut or trimmed.

**Turnaround Time** - Amount of time needed to complete a job.

**Two up, three up, etc** - Printing where one or many images are printed on the same side of a sheet.

**Typo** - Common abbreviation for a typographical error.

**Typography** - The design and layout of type.

## U

**UV INK** - Ink for use on use of uv presses

**UV Varnishing** - A machine printed varnish, hardened by ultra-violet light.

## V

**Varnish** - A transparent solution mixed with ink or printed over ink to produce a glossy surface finish.

**Vellum Paper** - Used mainly for certificates. The paper is tough and strong and has a good quality appearance.

**Virgin Fibre Paper or Board** - Pulp fibre which is being used for the first time and not recycled fibre.

## W

**Watermark** - A distinctive design incorporated into paper during manufacture which is visible when viewed under a light or a contrasting background.

**Web** - A continuous roll of paper.

**Web Fed** - A printing press with paper supplied by a web rather than single sheets

**Wire-O Binding** - A mechanical binding which uses a series of double wire loops formed from a single continuous wire running along its length.

**Woodfree** - A paper which contains no mechanical wood pulp. In practice it usually contains a small percentage of mechanical fibre.

**Work and Tumble** - To print one side of a sheet and turn it from front to back to print the second side, keeping the same alignment of the side edges on the press.

**Work and Turn** - When both sides of a sheet is set on one plate. After one surface of the sheet has been printed it is turned over side to side and backed up from the same plate.

**Work and Twist** - To print the same plate twice on the same side of a sheet turning the sheet through 360 degrees between print runs.

**Wove Paper** - This is made on a roll of closely woven, finely textured wire, and leaves no marks on the surface of the paper.

## XYZ

**X-height** - The mean height of lower case letters, such as c, e, o and of course x.

  
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