

# PRINTOLOGY

## Print Terminology - The Basics

- **Portrait/Landscape Orientation** – If an item's height is greater than its width it's referred to as portrait, and vice versa for a landscape item. Establishing the orientation of an item helps to clarify details such as whether to bind a book on the short edge or the long edge.
- **Size** – The finished size of the item to be printed.
- **Extent** – The number of 'printed sides' that the item has (see explanation below).
- **PP** – Stands for 'Printed Pages' and represents the number of 'sides' to be printed not the number of leaves (e.g. an A3 sheet folding in half becomes an A4 4pp).
- **Stock** – The paper, board or other material that is being printed onto.
- **Self-Cover** – A term used to refer to a printed book that uses the same type and weight of stock throughout (e.g. "I'd like a quote for a 12pp self-cover brochure").
- **Plus Cover** – A term used to refer to a printed book that utilises a different (usually heavier weight) stock for the cover compared to the inside pages (e.g. "I'd like a quote for a brochure, 8pp + 4pp cover").
- **6pp Cover** – Standard book covers are 4pp but sometimes a fold-out section is required making a 6pp cover (or 8pp if two fold-out flaps are required).

## Printing Methods and Machines

- **Litho** – Short for lithographic printing, a commonly used traditional print method using oil-based inks and water. The litho print process is best suited to longer production runs due to its relatively long setup times and fast running speeds.
- **Digital** – An alternative print process to litho, digital is a broad term used to describe several different print methods including laser printing, inkjet printing etc. Minimal setup time and slower

running speeds mean that this process is best suited to one-off prints and shorter production runs.

- **B3/B2/B1** – Size references used to describe the maximum sheet size capacity of different printing machines (B3 is oversized A3 etc.).
- **Wide Format** – A term used to describe digital printing machines (usually ink-jet) that can print to a width of 1 metre or more.
- **Web Print** – A high-speed litho print process where a large roll of paper is fed through the press in one continuous stream, as opposed to sheetfed offset presses which feed one sheet at a time (also at high speed but not as fast as a web press).
- **Ink-jet Print** – A short-run digital print process involving liquid inks that are sprayed onto the surface of a substrate.
- **Laser Print** – A digital print process that uses static fields and high temperatures to fuse powdered toner onto the surface of a substrate.
- **Flexo Print** – Short for flexography, a printing method that utilises a rubber plate with a raised image. Commonly used for producing self-adhesive labels on a roll.

## Print Artwork Terminology

- **CMYK** – Stands for the four process colours, Cyan, Magenta, Yellow and Black and are not suitable for printing from (see the 'Inks and Colours' section above). All artwork for print must either be output as CMYK or using spot Pantone colours – RGB colours are for on-screen viewing only.
- **Hi-Res** – An abbreviation for 'High Resolution', used when referring to the quality of print-ready artwork required in order to achieve a satisfactory end result.
- **PPI** – Stands for 'Pixels Per Inch' – a term that is often confused with DPI (Dots Per Inch) when referring to digital image resolution. 300dpi is usually regarded as the recommended resolution for print ready artwork.
- **PDF** – Stands for 'Portable Document Format', a file format commonly used for supplying artwork for print.
- **Crop Marks/Trim Marks** – Fine lines on the corners of a print ready PDF file, outside of the document area, that indicate where the finished item is to be trimmed.
- **Bleed** – When design elements such as images, colour blocks etc. extend to the edge of a printed item, a bleed allowance is required. This is simply a continuation or extension of the design element beyond the edge of the finished document, usually by a minimum of 3mm.

- **Vector Graphics** – Digital images constructed from lines and shapes in a two-or-three-dimensional space that can be scaled without any loss of quality.
- **Gradient/Vignette** – An image or block of colour that fades away gradually.
- **Crease/Cutter Guide** – Keylines within an artwork file that represent crease/cut lines and from which a cutting die is produced.
- **Spot UV Plate** – A separate artwork layer/file defining the area(s) to which spot UV varnish is to be applied.
- **Creep** – Incremental adjustments made to the spine margins throughout a saddle stitched book in order to avoid content on the fore-edge being trimmed off during the binding process as a result of the book sections bulking up in the spine.
- **Trapping** – A minuscule overlapping of adjacent design elements in a print ready artwork file which aids colour registration on press and helps to avoid unsightly gaps in the print.

## Printing Inks and Colours Terminology

- **CMYK** – Also known as ‘four colour process’, CMYK stands for Cyan, Magenta, Yellow and Black. It’s a globally recognised term that is used in all spheres of the print industry and across most printing methods.
- **RGB** – Red green blue, as above but the opposite as it is light source instead of reflection. RGB is needed for the monitor as light source, but we must convert to CMYK to print on paper.
- **Pantone** – An internationally recognised, standardised colour matching system.
- **Spot Colour** – A term used to describe a Pantone colour (over against CMYK/four colour process).
- **Machine Seal** – Clear varnish that is applied over the top of litho print to seal the ink and prevent scuffing. Although a machine seal is not always required it is often applied to CMYK print as standard these days.
- **UV Drying** – A process that uses high-powered Ultra Violet lighting to dry ink quickly. Commonly used with web printing presses (see definition above) due to the speed they run at. Also, essential when printing onto plastics or other non-porous surfaces.
- **Flood Coat** – A solid printed area right across a sheet.
- **Pantone Metallic** – Litho spot colour inks containing finely ground metal which gives a metallic sheen to the print.

## Print Finishes Terminology

- **Laminate** – Thin plastic film that is applied to the surface of a printed item to achieve a desired texture/finish or increase its durability. Comes in matt or gloss as standard with several other less common options also available (see below).
- **Anti-scuff Laminate** – A type of laminate that is resistant to abrasion and scratching. Especially suited to large areas of dark colour where scuffs and scratches would show prominently if a standard matt laminate were to be used.
- **Soft-touch Laminate** – Another type of laminate that is used to give printed items a soft, matt, velvet-like surface texture. Ideally suited to items where a high-end, luxury, tactile finish is required.
- **Spot UV** – A clear varnish that is used to highlight or draw attention to specific areas of a printed item. Gloss spot UV is particularly effective when applied to a matt laminated surface due to the contrasting finishes/textures. The 'UV' part of the name refers to the Ultra Violet light used to dry the varnish (see UV drying definition above).
- **Hot Foil Blocking** – Also referred to as 'foiling', this process uses a metal die to apply metal foil onto the surface of a substrate using heat and high pressure.
- **Emboss** – A specialist print finishing process that uses a male and female metal dies to stamp a raised design into the surface of a sheet of paper or board.
- **Blind Emboss** – A subtle emboss effect achieved by embossing a design onto either a plain unprinted area or a solid block of colour, without corresponding with specific elements of the printed design.
- **Deboss** – Similar process to embossing as described above but where a sunken design is stamped into the paper as opposed to a raised design.
- **Die Cut** – A print finishing process for cutting shapes out of a sheet of paper or board.
- **Kiss Cut** – As die cut above but where the cut only penetrates through the top layer of a sheet of self-adhesive label stock, leaving the base sheet intact.
- **Laser Cut** – An innovative process that uses a laser beam to cut detailed shapes out of a sheet of paper/board. Used where designs are too intricate for die cutting.
- **Duplex** – A process used for gluing two sheets of board together. Varying colours and types of board can be duplexed together to achieve different design effects.
- **Triplex** – As duplexing above but where three layers of board are glued together.

## Print Binding Terminology

- **Saddle Stitch/Two Wire Stitch** – A binding method that uses 2/4 wire staples in the spine to hold a book together. Suitable for thinner books (8pp – 96pp approx).
- **Loop Stitch** – As saddle stitch but with an extended loop in the wire staple which means the book can be inserted into a ring binder.
- **Perfect Binding/PUR Binding** – A glue-binding method that results in a square spine. Suitable for thicker books (40pp or more).
- **Wirobinding/Wire-o-binding** – A mechanical binding method using pre-formed wire combs that are looped through punched holes in the binding edge. Particularly effective where 'lay-flat' properties are required.
- **Comb Binding** – Similar to wirobinding but the comb is made from plastic instead of wire. Commonly used in the office environment for one-off binding tasks rather than for large-volume print production.
- **Case Binding** – Often referred to as hardcover or hardback binding, this traditional binding method achieves a high-quality and durable end result. Suitable for books of approx 32 pages or more.
- **End Papers** – The inside front and back covers of a case bound (hardback) book.

# A

- **Accordion fold** – two or more parallel folds that open like an accordion.
- **Aqueous Coating** – a water-based coating applied to protect printed piece – gloss or matte.
- **Artwork** – photographs, drawings, paintings, hand lettering to illustrate printed matter.
- **Alteration** – change in copy or specifications made after production has begun.
- **Author's Alterations** – corrections and/or changes made after submission of original copy.

# B

- **Banding** – method of packaging printed pieces using paper, rubber or fiberglass bands.
- **Bar code** – a pattern of vertical bars and spaces representing characters that is readable with a scanner.
- **Barrel fold** – folding a sheet two or more times in same direction.
- **Base colour** – a first colour used as a background on which other colours are printed.
- **Basic size** – a standard, predetermined size for a particular type of paper.
- **Basic weight** – the weight in pounds of a predetermined number of sheets of paper having a specific size for a specific type of paper.
- **Binding** – various methods of securing sections together and/or fastening them to a cover, to form singles copies.
- **Bleed** – printing that extends to the edge of a sheet or page after trimming.
- **Blind Embossing** – a raised impression made without using ink or foil.
- **Blueline** – a proof made directly from the press negative onto photo-sensitive paper showing the printed piece exactly as it will appear.
- **Bond paper** – strong durable paper grade used of letterheads and forms .
- **Brightness** – characteristic of paper referring to how much light it reflects.

- **Bristol** – type of board paper used for post cards, business cards, and other heavy-use products.

# C

- **C** – Roman numeral for 100
- **CF** – coated front
- **CB** – coated back
- **CFB** – coated front and back
- **Caliper** – thickness of paper, expressed in thousandths of an inch.
- **Camera ready** – the state in printing when the document is ready to be photographed to make plates for the press.
- **Camera-ready Copy** – artwork or pasted up material that is ready for reproduction. Camera copy should be clean, free of glue or trash, flat, and printed in dark ink.
- **C1S** – paper stock coated on one side.
- **C2S** – paper stock coated on both sides.
- **Carbonless** – paper that is coated with chemicals to produce copies without carbon in-between the sheets. (also referred to as NCR paper)
- **Card Stock** – a stiff rigid paper used for postcards, manual covers or table tents.
- **Carload** – usually 40,000 pounds of paper.
- **Case bind** – a type of binding used in making hard cover books using glue.
- **Cast coated** – coated paper with a surface similar to that of a glossy photograph.
- **Chipboard** – inexpensive, single-ply cardboard, usually brown or grey.
- **Coated Paper** – paper with a layer of coating applied to one or both sides, such as gloss, dull and matte finish.
- **Collate** – a finishing term for gathering paper in a precise order.

- **Colour separations** – the separation of colour artwork or transparencies on to separate sheet for each colour. The division of a multi-colour original into the primary process colours of yellow, magenta, cyan, and black.
- **Cotton fiber paper (rag content or cotton content)**– paper that contains 25% or more cellulose fibers derived from lint cotton, cotton linters and cotton or line cloth cuttings.
- **Copy** – all furnished material or disc used in the production of a printed product.
- **Copyright** – An exclusive right that has been granted by law to a particular creative product. The right of copyright gives protection to the originator of material to prevent use without express permission or acknowledgement of the originator.
- **Composition** – the process of setting type and arranging it on the page.
- **Cover stock** – a heavy printing paper used to cover books.
- **Crash printing** – letterpress printing on carbon or carbonless forms so image prints simultaneously on all sheets in the set.
- **Crash numbering** – numbering paper by pressing an image on the first sheet which is transferred to all parts of a printed set.
- **Crimping** – puncture marks holding business forms together.
- **Cut Sheet** – paper cut into standard sizes ready for use with a copier or press.
- **Cutting Die** – sharp edged device usually made of steel rule, to cut paper, cardboard, etc. on printing press.
- **CWT** – paper distributor abbreviation for 100 pounds.

## D

- **Density** – a measure of the relative difference between a white area and a toned or black area. Or the ability of a material to absorb light.
- **Die** – a metal rule or imaged block used to cut or place an image on paper in the finishing process.
- **Diecut** – The use of a sharp, formed piece of metal to cut out specific shapes in a piece of paper.
- **Drill** – to bore holes in paper so sheets fit over posts of loose-leaf binders.

- **Dry gum paper** – label paper with glue that can be activated by water.
- **Duotones** – 2 colours combined to reproduce pictures with greater depth.
- **Dull finish** – characteristic of paper that reflects relatively little light.

## E

- **Embossing** – a process performed after printing to stamp a raised or depressed image into the surface of paper using engraved metal embossing dies, extreme pressure and heat.
- **Embossed paper** – a paper surface textured in one of a variety of patterns by passing the paper through engraved steel rolls.
- **Engraving** – method of printing using a plate, with an image carved into it.
- **Enamel paper** – a coated sheet or the coating on a sheet.
- **Estimate** – a price provided to a customer, based on the specifications outlined on the estimate form; it is normally set prior to the entry of an order and prices may change if the order specifications are not the same as the estimate specifications.

## F

- **Finishing** – the bindery process performed after the document has been copied or printed.
- **Finish** – surface characteristic of paper.
- **Finish size** – size of printed product after production is complete.
- **Flyer** – an inexpensively produced circular used for promotional distribution.
- **Foil emboss** – to foil stamp and emboss an image on paper with a die.
- **Foil stamp** – a letterpress process using foil and dies. Foil is transferred from its backing to the paper when stamped with a heated die.
- **Format** – size, shape and overall style of layout or printed piece.

- **Four-Colour Process** – printing in full colour using four colour separations negatives and ink (yellow, magenta, cyan and black) which reproduce full-colour photographs of art. (colour pictures)

# G

- **GBC binding** – plastic comb binding.
- **Galley Proof** – a proof of text copy before it is formatted for the page.
- **Galleys** – the printing term for long metal trays used to hold type after it has been set but before the press run.
- **Gather** – to assemble or collect sections into the proper sequence for binding.
- **Gloss** – characteristic of paper, ink or varnish that reflects relatively large amounts of light.
- **Glossy** – photographic print made on glossy paper.
- **Glue-on-fold** – a binding method where a strip of glue is placed along the fold of a page or signature.
- **Gothic** – typefaces with no serifs and broad, even strokes.
- **Graphic design** – the use of graphic elements and text to communicate an idea or concept.  
Gusset – expandable portion of bag, file folder or envelope.

# H

- **Halftone** – an illustration reproduced by breaking down the original tone into a pattern of dots of varying size. Light areas have small dots and darker areas or shadows have larger dots.
- **Head-to-head** – printing on both sides of a sheet where the top of each page is placed at the same end.
- **Head-to-foot printing** on both sides of a sheet where the top of each page is placed at the opposite ends.
- **Hard copy** – a printed paper copy of output in readable form.

- **Hot stamping** – a letterpress process using foil and dies. Foil is transferred from its backing to the paper when stamped with a heated die.

## I

- **Imposition** – the process of arranging the pages of copy so that when the sheets are printed and folded for binding the pages will be in the proper order.
- **Impression** – the image produced in a single operation on a printer, copier or press.
- **Imprinting** – the printing of additional information on an already printed piece.
- **Inserts** – extra printed pages inserted loosely into printed pieces.
- **Index paper** – light weight board paper for writing and easy erasure.

## K

- **Kraft paper** – strong paper, usually brown Kromekote – high-gloss, cast-coated paper.

## L

- **Laminate** – a thin transparent plastic coating applied to paper or board to provide protection and give it a glossy finish.
- **Layout** – sketch or drawing of a design for a proposed printed piece showing position, size and colour of copy.
- **Ledger paper** – strong, smooth bond paper used for keeping business records.
- **Letterpress** – method of printing from raised surfaces. A letter press is the kind of press used.
- **Leaf** – a sheet in a book. Two pages. The front and back together of a page is called a “leaf”.

- **Light weight paper** – book grade paper of basis weight 40# or less with high opacity for its weight.
- **Line negative** – high contrast negative usually made from line copy.
- **Lithography** – method of printing using a chemically-coated plate whose image areas attract ink and whose non-image areas repel ink.

# M

- **Make Ready** – all activities required to set up the press for a pressrun, including running test sheets of paper.
- **Manilla paper** – strong, buff-coloured paper used to make envelopes and file folders.
- **Matchprint** – integral colour proof.
- **Magnetic ink** – a magnetised ink that can be read by electronic machines – used in check printing.
- **Marginal words** – call outs for directions on various parts of a business form.
- **Matte finish** – dull finish paper.
- **Matte ink** – ink that appears dull when dry.
- **M** – Roman numeral for 1,000
- **Mechanical binding** – a method of binding which secures pre-trimmed leaves or signatures by the insertion of wire or plastic through holes drilled or punched in the binding edge.
- **Micrometer** – instrument used to measure thickness of paper.
- **Mike** – to measure the thickness of a sheet of paper using a micrometer.
- **Mock-up** – a rough visual of a publication or design.
- **Mylar** – polyester film.

# N

- **Negative** – characteristic of image on film or paper in which blacks in the original subject are white or clear and whites in the original are black or opaque. Also, piece of film on which negative image appears.
- **Numbering** – putting a sequential number on each copy.

# O

- **Offset** – a method in which the plate or cylinder transfers an ink image to an offset or transfer roller, which then transfers the image to stock.
- **Offset paper** – uncoated book paper.
- **Offset printing** – method of lithographic printing that transfers ink from a plate to a blanket, then from the blanket to paper.
- **Opaque** – relates to the show-through of the printed image from the opposite side of the sheet or the sheet under it.
- **Opacity** – characteristic of paper that helps prevent printing on one side from showing on the other.
- **Overlay** – a transparent sheet used in the preparation of multi-colour artwork showing the colour breakdown and designer instructions.
- **Over Run** – the number of pieces that were printed in excess of the quantity specified.

# P

- **PMS colour** – Pantone matching system – an international system used to mix inks to standard colours used by printers.
- **Pad** – to bind by applying glue along one edge of a stack of sheets.

- **Page count** – total number of pages, including blanks and printed pages without numbers
- **Page proofs** – a proof output to plain paper before the entire job is printed.
- **Pagination** – the numbering of pages in a book.
- **Parchment** – paper that simulates writing surfaces made from animal skins.
- **Parallel fold** – folds that are parallel to each other – a letter is parallel fold
- **Paste-up** – the positioning of artwork and type to make camera ready copy.
- **Pattern carbon** – special carbon paper used in business forms that only transfers in certain areas.
- **Perfect Binding** – a binding process whereby single sheets are stacked together, the binding edge is ground to create a rough surface and adhesive is applied. A cover is then wrapped around the pages.
- **Perforating** – punching small holes or slits in a sheet of paper or cardboard to facilitate tearing along a desired line.
- **Plastic Combs** – a binding that allows the publication to lay flat when open. Often called GBC.
- **Press numbering** – method of numbering manufactured business forms or tickets
- **Prepress** – the processes performed on a printing order prior to its going to the press to be printed. (examples: typesetting, layout, scanning, etc.)
- **Pressure-sensitive paper** – paper material with self sticking adhesive covered by a backing sheet.
- **Proof (Blue-line)** – a method of checking for errors prior to printing an order.
- **Proof (Galley)** – typeset material before it has been arranged into final page.
- **Proof (press)** – Actual press sheets to show image, tone values and colours as well as imposition of frame or press-plate.

# R

- **Rag bond** – high quality paper, a percentage of which is made from cotton fibers Ream – five hundred sheets of paper

- **Reverse** – type or other image defined by printing the background rather than the image itself, allowing the underlying colour of paper or previously printed ink to show in the shape of the image.

# S

- **Saddle Stitch** – the binding of sheets of paper to form a book which works by stapling in seam where sheets are folded.
- **Score** – to mechanically crease or press a channel into paper along a line so it will fold more easily.
- **Self-cover** – using same paper as the text for the cover
- **Self-mailer** – printed piece designed to be mailed without an envelope.
- **Shrink wrap** – a tight fitting plastic wrap used to protect a publication from handling or storage problems.
- **Side stitch** – to bind by stapling through sheets along one edge.
- **Signature** – a section of a book made by folding a printed sheet so that the pages follow in correct order.( standard signatures are 8, 16 & 32)
- **Slip Sheet** – blank sheet placed between newly-made printed products to prevent setoff or scuffing during handling and shipping.
- **Slit** – to cut paper using a disk or wheel
- **Specifications** – complete and precise descriptions of paper, ink, binding, quantity and other features of a printing job.
- **Spine** – the binding edge of a book
- **Spiral bind** – a binding method using a continuous coil of wire extending from the top to the bottom of the spine.
- **Stock** – paper used for a printing job



# T

- **Tag** – board grade paper used for products such as tags and file folders.
- **Text** – the written or printed material which forms the main body of a publication.
- **Text paper** – lighter than cover stock but heavier than writing grade.
- **Thermography** – a finishing technique applied after printing that raises the ink and gives the effect of engraved printing.
- **Trim** – the cutting of the finished product to the correct size.
- **Transparency** – a colour or black and white photographically produced image on transparent film.
- **Turnaround time** – amount of time needed to complete a job
- **Two-up** – printing two up or three up means printing the same image twice or three times on the same sheet of paper in one impression
- **Transfer tape** – a peel and stick tape used in business forms
- **Trim size** – the final size of one printed image after the last trim is made.

# U

- **Uncoated paper** – paper that is not clay coated
- **Under-run** – production run of fewer copies than the amount specified. UV coating – liquid laminate bonded and cured with ultraviolet light

# V

- **Varnishing** – a finishing process whereby a transparent varnish is applied over the printed sheet to serve as protection, produce a glossy finish or colour.

- **Vellum finish** – relatively rough finish on uncoated paper
- **Velox** – a black and white print of a screened image, line art and/or copy.

# W

- **Watermark** – distinctive design created in paper during manufacture
- **Web** – a roll of printing paper
- **Wove paper** – a paper having a uniform unlined surface with a smooth finish

# X

- **Xerography** – alternate term for photocopying



**LOVE PRINT**

**Let's Talk...**

hello@loveprintgroup.com

020 7613 7880

76 Hoxton St, London, N1 6LP