

Printing Glossary

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Printing seems like a simple process in some ways, but there are a lot of terms we use for all of the different aspects of the process. We want our customers to be well informed, and to know what we are talking about when we use the jargon of the trade. With that in mind, here is a list of terms we often use when talking about printing.



Abrasion Resistance: The ability of a piece of fabric to resist fading or wear when in contact with other materials.

Absorbency: How well a piece of paper, or other material, absorbs the ink in the printing process.

ACCO: A company that supplies branded school or consumer products.

Accordion Fold: A bindery or folding term which describes folds in printed material that opens like an accordion, often in the form of brochures.

Acetate: A chemical substance from acetic acid. It is often used to describe plastic film used to make overlays during setup of a print job.

Achromatic: Sometimes used to describe black and white. It is light without color.

Alignment: This is the bringing together of primary colors to create an image. Each color must be aligned to get a clear image.

Apron: An additional amount of white space around the margins of a piece of printing work.

Back Margin: The margin that is closest the back of the book.

Bindery: The process of trimming or combining pages, or binding them to together as in making a book. Can also refer to trimming, or the finishing of a book or magazine.

Blueprint: A type of printing often referring to construction drawings. At one time it involved white lines on blue paper, but now any color may be used.

Brochure: A printed paper that is folded into a leaflet or pamphlet. Usually used to advertise a product or service, or to give basic information.

C Laminated: Lamination refers to a thin clear plastic film overing printed material, like a soft back book cover.

Cad Color Plotting: An outline for the colors in a print job, often used in construction printing services.

Chicago Screw Post Bindings: A specific type of screw posts used in binding, which comes in many clors.

CMYK: The basic colors of the printing process, Cyan, Magenta, Yellow, Black. A different plate is used for each color.

Collating Marks: The markings on paper to show how they could be collated, or assembled in the proper sequence.

Color Printing: A process of printing that delivers full color, as opposed to black and white.

Commercial Printing: Print jobs for individuals or businesses, like fliers, brochures, business cards.

Cyan: One of the primary colors used in the printing process, which is blue

Digital Proof: An electronic image of what will be printed.

DPI: Dots Per Inch, showing the resolution.

Embossed: An external printing on top of already printed material.

GBC: An office supply manufacturer, General Binding Corporation.

High Volume Printing: Printing a high number of pages.

Ink Jet Bond: A type of paper used in ink jet printing.

Iridescent Paper: A specialty paper that has a shiny appearance.

Kerning: The distance between letters, kerning refers to changing that distance.

Large Format Printing: Printing large pieces, such as billboards or very large photos.

Margin: The edges of a piece of printed materail.

Offset Paper: One of the grades of paper used in printing.

Orthochromatic: Material sensitive to all kinds of light except for red.

Oversized Prints: Photos that are larger than standard format and require special equipment.

Pantone Matching System: A system for comparing how printed material will look.

Paperboard: A thick paper.

Plotters: Computer printer for vector graphics.

Raster: Rectangular patterns of a dot matrix structure.

Ream: 500 sheets of paper.

Reprographics: A method for reproducing content.

RGB: Primary colors used in printing, Red, Green Blue

Stabbing: Folded sections of a book are stabbed with wire, also called side stitching.

Vector: A term for images in computer graphics.

Vellum: A specialize paper or parchment.

Wide Format Plotter: A printer for large printing catering to the width of the project.

Xerographic Paper: Paper used in a laser printer.