

THE A – Z OF PREPRESS

Authors Corrections

Corrections made by the customer after copy or artwork has been given to the printer. The change could be in copy, specifications or both, altering it from the original copy.

Artwork

All original copy, including type, photos and illustrations intended for printing.

Bitmap

Image formed by different densities of pixels in a rectangular grid.

Bleed

Printed image designed to run off the edge of the paper. The bleed allowance is usually 3 mm beyond the trimmed size.

Camera Ready

Type and/or artwork that has been pasted into position to be photographed for plate ready film.

Choke (Choking)

Technique of slightly reducing the size of an image to create a hairline trap or to outline. This is done to compensate for minor paper movement in the press.

Chromalin

A type of colour proof, produced from colour separated film, used to give an indication of how the full colour printed page will look for both colour and content.

With the introduction of computer to plate (CTP) technology, chromalins have been superseded by digital proofing processes.

Colour Correction

Alteration to the colour values of an illustration or hi-res scan to achieve a desired result.

Colour Management Systems

Electronic characterisation, calibration and control systems that help to assure colour consistency and accuracy throughout the print production process from scanning through previewing on screen and proofing to reproduction on the press.

Colour Proof

A colour reproduction of a job to show intended content and/or colour prior to printing.

Colour Separation

Separating full colour into the four process colours by means of scanning or filters, resulting in four films/plates for printing.

Compositor

Also referred to as the typographer or typesetter. The individual who sets type, originally done by hand, but now by electronic means.

Computer To Press

A printing system that is capable of rapidly changing the images it is printing on the press without the use of removable plates.

Continuous Tone

An image of the four colours (CMYK) before it is broken into dots.

Contrast

The level of variation in tone or density between the highlight (lightest) and shadow (darkest) areas.

Creep

The shifting position of the page in a saddle stitched book, which moves the inside signatures or pages away from the spine, effectively reducing the page size progressively towards the centre of the book.

Printers need to allow for this creep by offsetting the pages towards the spine by a set amount dependant on paper weight and number of pages. This is done automatically at the imposition stage or by manually offsetting individual elements (also known as bulking).

Crop

To eliminate portions of an image or photograph that are not required.

Crop Marks

Symbols placed in the margin outside the image area that indicates to the printer and the bindery the area to be printed and/or trimmed from the image.

CTP – Computer To Plate

A process where printing plates are imaged directly by laser from computer files via a platesetter, without the intermediate step of creating separated film or traditional plate making. Printlink is able to offer production utilising Computer To Plate technology.

DAM (Digital Asset Management)

Database systems used to track and manage computer files in computer graphics environments.

Digital Proofing

Proofing generated by computer rather than a physical object such as film, plates or bromides. Examples include laser proofing, sherpa proofing, iris proofing.

Direct to Plate

Often used as a synonym for computer to plate.

Dot

The individual element of a halftone.

Dots Per Inch (DPI)

A measure of the output resolution of a laser printer, image setter, or CTP unit. The higher the DPI of a digital image, the better the resulting printed image. Generally, images for print production should be saved at 350dpi.

Duotone

A duotone is an image printed in two colours.

Dyeline

A printer's photographic proof from film where all colours show as shades of a single colour on white paper. Also referred to as a copy art, blueline, or dylux. The use of dyelines has been superseded by digital proofing associated with CTP technology.

Emulsion

The chemically treated side of photographic film. (The dull side not the shiny side.) Depending on the printing process involved, film will be requested as "right reading" emulsion up or emulsion down.

EPS (EPSF)

Encapsulated Postscript File. A vector based, computer graphics file format developed by Adobe Systems. EPS is the preferred format for many computer illustrations, because of its efficient use of memory and fine colour control. Not to be confused with Postscript.

Folio

The page number. Conventionally, right hand pages contain odd folios, left hand pages contain even folios.

FPO (For Position Only)

A low resolution image in a document to indicate size and position for the same high resolution image.

FTP (File Transfer Protocol)

The method for uploading and downloading files to/from internet server systems.

GIF

An eight bit (256 colours or shades of grey) or less computer file format. Though commonly used in websites, GIF files are almost never used for professional printing.

Graphic

A non text item (illustration or photograph) to be printed.

Halftone

A reproduction of a continuous tone image (i.e. a photograph or painting) using fine dots of varying size and spacing to reproduce the shades and textures of the original.

Hexachrome

A proprietary colour separation process, developed by Pantone, that uses six instead of four process colours. (CMYK plus orange and green).

Highlight

The lightest area of a photograph that has the smallest or fewest dots when made into a halftone.

HTML (Hyper Text Markup Language)

A language used to format and link (markup) text for display in internet browser applications.

Hyperlink

An indexed piece of text which, when clicked with a pointing device, (i.e. a mouse) prompts new information to be loaded to the viewers computer system.

Imposition

The process of positioning multiple pages on a flat sheet of paper to be printed at one time, which, when folded, will read consecutively.

Imagesetter

A high resolution device that prints directly to plate ready film at a high resolution.

Imprint

This page holds the publishers name, an ISBN number, credits, copyright and national library details.

ISBN

International Standard Book Number.

JPEG (Joint Photographic Electronic Group)

A common standard for compressing image data for electronic delivery (CD ROM Digital Cameras or Web). JPEG is not commonly used in printing because of data loss which leads to degraded images.

Kern

To adjust the lateral space between individual letters.

Keyline

A line, often a box around a graphic image.

Landscape

A page format which is wider than it is deep, as opposed to portrait.

Leading

The space, measured in points, between consecutive lines of type. (Originally from the strips of lead placed between lines of hot type.)

Leaf

One sheet of paper in a publication. One leaf equals 2 pages in a publication.

Lupe (Loupe)

From the German word for magnifying glass, a lens used by photographers, printers, and designers to examine details in printed materials.

Margin

The blank space around the image area of a page.

Midtone

The tonal values of an image that fall midway between the highlight and shadow dots.

Moire

A pattern, which is created when two or more screen patterns are placed over one another.

Monotone

A single colour image.

Native File

A file created within layout application software. The file is in a proprietary format only that application can recognise.

PDF (Portable Document File)

A proprietary format developed by Adobe Systems for the transfer of designs across multiple computer platforms.

Pica

A unit of measurement equal to twelve (12) points or one sixth (1/6) of an inch. Used by designers and other graphic professionals for its precision.

Pixel

The individual element of a picture captured by a scanner or displayed on a monitor. The brightness and colour of individual pixels and the frequency controls the resolution of the picture. Many pixels together create an image on your screen.

Plate

Aluminum image carrier used to transfer ink to a blanket for printed impression onto paper. One printing plate is required for each ink colour printed. Plates work on the basis that the imaged areas attract ink and repel water, while the non-image areas attract water and repel ink. Recommended for text, line art and graphics for all general commercial work.

Plate Ready Film

Final photographic film or other artwork used to “burn” printing plates. No additional paste-up or stripping should be required if artwork is actually plate ready.

PMS Colour (Pantone Matching System)

A proprietary colour system for choosing and matching specific spot and process colours.

Postscript

A copyright term for page description language which is used to describe the appearance of a page prepared on a computer to a laser printer, imagesetter, platesetter or digital press.

Postscript File

A data file containing all the information that is needed to print a page or stream of pages. Contains all picture and text data and may include font information and other control data if required.

Point

A unit of measurement equal to 1/12th of a pica or 1/72nd of an inch. Normally used to measure type size or fractions of a pica for the design process.

Polymer Plates

A vinyl based short life image carrier plate, mainly used in the newspaper industry where resolution levels are not as high as that in commercial printing. Generally for printing almost anything from between 70dpi to 200dpi, whereas, commercial printing requires an ideal minimum of 350dpi.

Polymer plates are not recommended for quality print work, including text, line art and graphics.

Preflight

The process of checking that a client’s digital files are correctly prepared for production. Includes checking separations, files, fonts, links etc.

Process Colour

The mechanical process of reproducing a full colour image with the three primary subtractive colour inks (CMY – Cyan, Magenta, Yellow) and K – Black. When viewed under a lupe, the individual colour halftone dots can be seen in a process colour image.

Proof

Printed sheet for checking type and colour. A test image produced to show what the finished product will look like in terms of content and colour.

Proof Reading Marks

Standardised codes used for marking up proof corrections.

Recto Page

The right hand or odd numbered page of an open book.

Register Marks

Marks on film/plates that when superimposed during the printing process the rest of the work is in register.

Resolution

Sharpness of an image, usually expressed in dots per inch (dpi) when applied to paper output and in lines per inch (lpi) when applied to plate output. This is commonly specified based on the surface type of papers to be printed.

RGB

Red, green, blue, the colours used by a computer monitor to create colour images on the screen. RGB images are not suitable for use in the print production process.

Most scanners capture their image in RGB values, necessitating the conversion of the image to CMYK values for print reproduction.

RIP (Raster Image Processor)

A computer device which takes the postscript data describing pages and converts it to bitmap format for imaging on an imagesetter, platesetter, digital press, or other imaging device.

Sans Serif

A typeface that has no tails or curled points (serifs) at the ends.

Scanner

Electronic device used to digitise an image. Scans are usually saved as EPS or TIFF files.

Scatter Proof

Proofs of illustrations where the subjects are arranged in a random order.

Screen

Screens are the "tinting" or "shading" of a solid image area. Screens are defined as percentages from 99% to 1% of a solid.

Screen Ruling

A measure of the quality or fineness of the dot structure used to reproduce a halftone image or tint expressed in lines per inch or centimetre.

Script

A typeface that mimics the appearance of hand written text.

Serif

The curls and points that appear as adornments on some type faces.

Signature (Sig)

All pages of a book or other bound print job, to be printed on a single sheet through a printing press. (Bound pages are always in groups divisible by four, 2 outside and 2 inside pages.)

Specs

Complete and precise written description of features of a printing job such as type size, paper grade and quantity, printing quality or binding method.

Templates

Predetermined and saved formats for page layouts.

TIFF

Tagged Image File Format, a bitmapped file format used for the reproduction of continuous tone images such as photographs and illustrations.

Tint

A solid colour reduced in shade by screening.

Trapping

Trapping colour is achieved by the use of chokes and spreads, and is the technique of slightly overlapping one image on an adjacent one to avoid white gaps if any paper movement occurs in printing.

Trim marks

A mark to indicate where a piece is to be cut.

Vector Graphics

Any of a number of graphics formats including EPS(F) and DXF which describe objects on the screen not as coloured pixels but as mathematically defined shapes. Vector graphics can be rescaled to any size without any effect to file size or resolution. Typically, vector graphics occupy less disk space than their bitmapped (rasterised) counterparts.

Verso Page

The left hand or even numbered page of a book.

Wet Proof

Proof produced from final plates, printed onto the intended stock to be used for the main production and showing exact colour reproduction. This process will not, however, allow for all processes which occur during the main print production such as dot gain, paper stretch etc.

Widow

The first line or last line of a paragraph that is left on its own on the next line, column or page.