

# Glossary of Print-Buying and Paper Management Terms

*Expert knowledge means success*



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Note: This publication has not been updated since it was last published. Some of the hyperlinks may have changed and may need updating. In addition, some of the information in this publication may be out of date.

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## Introduction

We have compiled this glossary of terms to assist you to understand the “jargon” which is used in print-buying and paper management. This glossary is limited to terms commonly used in the process of print-buying and paper management but we publish several other glossaries as well – check our website or call us for details.

## Print-Buying Terms

- A sizes - Most common paper size used for general printing, stationery and publications.
- Absolute White - In theory, a material that perfectly reflects all light energy at every visible wavelength. In practice, a solid white with known spectral data used as the "reference white" for all measurements of absolute reflectance.
- Against the Grain - At right angles to the grain direction of paper.
- Airbrush – a pen-shaped ink sprayer used to retouch photographic prints and create illustrations.
- Alley – The space between columns of type on a page.
- Art Paper - Paper which has received a special coating to give it a smooth gloss finish. Its meaning is often confused but it is more easily termed as a gloss coated paper.
- Artwork - Finished layout of typesetting, drawings and photographs, made up in a form which is ready for the printer to print from.
- Artwork on Disk - Complete, requiring no edits, ready to output to final film or direct to plate, and provided in recognised commercial software such as Illustrator, Freehand, CorelDraw, Adobe Pagemaker, Adobe In Design, Quark Express, or Photoshop.
- A Sheet - The reference sometimes used for a carbonless top sheet (i.e. the first part of a carbonless multipart form, CB coated).
- Author's Corrections - Corrections made by the author on page proofs that alter the original copy. The costs of making such alterations are charged by the printer, in contrast to printer's errors or house corrections.
- Banks and Bonds - A range of printing and writing papers, the better qualities of which were at one time made largely from rags. The heavier substance papers, above a substance of about 60 g/m<sup>2</sup>, are often used for correspondence and letterheads, and are known as bonds, while the lighter weights called banks used largely for file copy papers have less use today with the introduction of the automated office.
- B sizes - Less common paper sizes which are used mainly for bigger jobs. e.g. Posters, wall charts etc.
- Bleed - Printing where the colour continues right up to the edge of the paper.
- Board - While there is no internationally agreed rule, paper exceeding 170g/m is usually referred to as board.
- Bromide - A high quality black and white proof.
- Burst perfect bind. - To bind by forcing glue into notches in spines of signatures, and then adhering a paper cover.
- C sizes - Paper sizes used for envelopes, designed to take A size paper.
- Camera Ready - Finished artwork that is ready, without further artwork preparation, to be photographed.
- 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 - A term used to describe plain paper which has received a special coating to give an enhanced surface for detail and colour reproduction.
- Coater - Part of a printing press which applies coatings to printed literature.
- 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. They tend to be more scuff resistant than varnishes and there is also less risk of yellowing paper. However, oil-based varnishes are better if specific areas of a document need to be coated. (spot varnish).
- Colour mark up - Specifications on a piece of artwork to a printer, showing the required colours for the item to be printed.

- Contact Frame - Equipment which converts film to printing plates.
- Cromalin - A photographic colour proof which allows you to check on colour and content before plates are made.
- Die-Cut - A shaped cut out leaflet or brochure.
- Desktop Publishing (DTP) - The creation of artwork and print from your computer. Requires special software and a fairly powerful PC or Apple Macintosh.
- Digital Press (or Digital Printing) - Printing in which an image is applied to paper or another substrate directly from a digital file rather than using film and/or plates.
- DL Envelope - A standard envelope size measuring 110mm x 220mm. They take A4 sheets, folded into three.
- Dummy - A sample of a proposed job made up with the actual materials and cut to size to show bulk etc
- Embossing - The process of raising letters or designs on card or tough paper already printed.
- Finishing - All operations after printing.
- Folio - Page numbers
- Font - A set of letters, numbers and symbols that share a unified design. The design is called a typeface.
- Four Colour Process - Full colour printing using four constituent colours: Cyan, Yellow, Magenta and Black.
- GSM - Grams per square metre. Standard measure of paper weight.
- Gloss Coating - A coating applied to printed matter which is quick drying and protects literature from ink smudging and finger marking and gives a gloss finish. Please refer to coating to see the difference between varnishes and coatings.
- Gloss Coated Paper - See Art Paper.
- Gloss Varnish - A varnish applied to printed matter to protect against smudging and finger marking and gives a gloss finish.
- Image - The inked areas on a printing plate.
- Imagesetter - A high speed image processor which is used to output film.
- Imposition - Plans for the arrangement of the pages of a job so that they will follow in the correct sequence when folded.
- International Paper Sizes - The standard range of metric paper sizes as per definition of the International Standards Organisation (ISO) and British Standards Institute.
- Laminating - A thin plastic film used on the covers of printed literature to give protection. This can be gloss or matt.
- Laser Proof - Low quality proofs which can be colour or black and white. They are used mainly for checking layout and text but not colour. For enhanced laser proofs, it is advisable to use digital colour proofs which give sharper text and images but again unsuitable for colour representation.
- Lithographic (Litho) Printing - See Offset Litho
- Matt Coated Paper - Plain paper which has received a special coating to give a smooth, matt finish.
- Matt Coating - A coating applied to printed matter which is quick drying and protects literature from ink smudging and finger marking and gives a matt finish. Please refer to coating to see the key differences between varnishes and coatings.
- Matt Varnishes - A varnish applied to printed literature to protect against smudging and finger marking and gives a matt finish. Please refer to coating to see the key differences between varnishes and coatings.
- Machine Fold - The process of mechanically folding printed paper.
- Machine Varnish - A general varnish applied to printed literature to protect or seal against smudging or finger marking.
- Origination - All the items needed to put together and print the job. e.g. Artwork, photography, typesetting etc
- Offset Litho(graphy) - A printing process by which the inked image to be printed is transferred (offset) first to a rubber layer before coming into contact with the paper which takes up the inked areas.
- Overs - The extra printed products delivered to a customer over and above the net amount ordered.
- Ozalid Proof - A low quality black and white proof which is often used for books to check pagination.
- Pantone Reference - International system of colour specification for printing.
- Perfect Binding - Pages of a book which are glued together to give a square spine.
- Perfecting - A printing press which prints on both sides of a sheet of paper in one operation.
- Printing Plate - A metal plate which has the inked images involved in the offset lithography printing process. It is important to realise that each colour in a printing job requires a separate plate. In order to keep costs down, it is

advisable not to have too many special colours.

- Process Colours - The colours which make up full colour printing. Cyan, magenta, yellow and black
- Progressive Proof - A proof which shows the impression from each individual colour plate and how they progressively build up the full colour piece.
- Proof - A printed sample of work to be checked for errors in text, positioning or quality of colour reproduction. There are six types - laser, cromalin, bromide, ozalid, progressive and wet proofs.
- Resolution - Refers to the degree of detail of an image. It is usually measured in dots per inch (dpi) or lines per inch (lpi). A high resolution gives a high-quality image and vice versa.
- Saddle Stitch - When the pages of a printed document e.g. leaflet, brochures are bound together using metal staples.
- Scanner - The equipment which converts colour transparencies or colour artwork into digital images on a computer in preparation for film output.
- Scans - The name given to colour transparencies or colour artwork which have been converted to digital images on a computer.
- Sealer - This is an alternative name for a coater.
- Sealer Coating - A coating applied to printed matter which is quick drying and protects literature from ink smudging and finger marking and gives a neutral finish. Please refer to coating to see the difference between varnishes and coatings.
- Sealer Varnish - A varnish applied to printed literature to protect against finger marking and smudging and gives a neutral finish. Please refer to coating to see the difference between varnishes and coatings.
- Set Off - During the printing process, this is the unintentional transfer of wet ink to another sheet.
- Sheet Fed Press - Printing presses which are fed by separate sheets of paper. They are suitable for all types of commercial printing, particularly high-quality work.
- Silk Coating - A coating applied to printed matter which is quick drying and protects literature from ink smudging and finger marking and gives a silk finish. Please refer to coating to see the difference between varnishes and coatings.
- Silk Varnish - A varnish applied to printed literature to protect against finger marking and smudging and gives a silk finish. Please refer to coating to see the difference between varnishes and coatings.
- Shrink Wrapping - Method of packing printed products etc, by surrounding them by plastic, then shrinking by heat.
- Special Colour - A colour which cannot be made up of the four component colours - CMYK. They are listed in a pantone colour swatch book. For example, if a corporate logo contains a special blue and is included in a brochure with photographs and text; this is termed a five colour job. (CMYK (pictures+text) + special blue = 5 colours)
- Tint - Percentage shade of a colour.
- Typesetting - The assembly of text and pictures on a PC by keyboard or other digital means.
- Typo - Short for 'typographical error' - a mistake in the copy.
- Uncoated Paper - Plain paper which is not coated.
- UV Varnish - A special varnish which has undergone an accelerated drying process using ultra violet is applied to printed matter to enhance its appearance. A gloss UV Varnish is commonly used and this gives a very shiny effect.
- Varnishes - Special varnishes applied to printed matter to protect literature from ink smudging or finger marking or to enhance appearance. There are five main types - sealer, gloss, matt and silk and UV. Varnishes are commonly used on matt or silk coated paper as these types are more prone to smudging than gloss coated paper. Varnish applied to a specific area of a document is known as Spot varnish and when it is applied to the whole document it is termed as an Overall varnish (or less commonly as a Flood varnish). The difference between a varnish and a coating is that varnishes take longer to dry but are better when applied to a specific area of a document.
- Visual - A preliminary layout, indicating the general design, and the position of the various elements.
- Web Fed Press - Presses which are fed by paper from a reel as distinct from separate sheets. They are normally used for low quality high run work.
- Wet Proof - A wet proof is a proof that is made using the screens, stencils, ink, substrate etc to produce a limited run to be checked by the customer as an exact sample of the final print.

## Further Information

If what you were looking for isn't here, try the business dictionary and business glossary directory at:

[www.glossarist.com/glossaries/business/](http://www.glossarist.com/glossaries/business/)

This guide is for general interest - it is always essential to take advice on specific issues.

We believe that the facts are correct as at the date of publication, but there may be certain errors and omissions for which we cannot be responsible.

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