

JARGON BUSTER & TIPS

Our handy guide explains the most common terms used in printing services and the best way to create your files for a hassle free process.

BACKING UP/DOUBLE SIDED

The process used in printing services where the reverse side of the sheet is printed on.

BLEED

An area of the document outside of the final printed page this allows us to trim accurately to the finished page size. We recommend you use a 3mm bleed (illustration below).



When you export your document as a pdf for upload, make sure you include the bleed in your output settings.

CMYK vs RGB

CMYK, (Cyan, Magenta, Yellow & Black) are the colours used in the printing process, whereas RGB (Red, Green & Blue) are the colours used by your digital camera, computer & scanners. Your document should be created in CMYK mode so that the colours that you see on the screen closely match the final printed product. If you create your document in RGB, the colours in your printed product may vary slightly. Many of the bright values produced by your monitor cannot be produced in print.

CROP MARKS / TRIM MARKS

Crop marks, also known as trim marks, are lines printed in the corners of your publications sheet to show printers where to trim the paper (illustrated above under BLEED). They are used for creating bleeds where an image or color on the page needs to extend all the way to the edge of the paper. We print on a larger sheet of paper and then trim it down to the correct size, and crop marks are used to define where to trim. So, to print crop marks, you must print on a paper size that is larger than the page size you have set for your publication.

DIGITAL PRINTING

Modern printing methods such as laser and ink-jet printing are known as digital printing. In digital printing, an image is sent directly to the printer using digital files such as PDFs and those from graphics software such as Illustrator and InDesign. This eliminates the need for a printing plate, which is used in offset printing, which can save money and time. Without the need to create a plate, digital printing has brought about fast turnaround times and printing on demand. Instead of having to print large, pre-determined runs, requests can be made for as little as one print.

DPI

Stands for dots per Inch and is a measure of the quality of an image. We recommend saving pictures at a minimum of 300dpi, anything lower than this would be classed as poor quality. Website pictures are saved at a low resolution of 72dpi and are not suitable for use in printed material. If you try and print your files at 72 dpi you will end up with blurry, fuzzy pictures.



High resolution image at 300 dpi (dots per inch), suitable for book printing.



Low resolution image at 72 dpi, which will look crisp on a monitor, but look choppy when printed in a book.

FINISHING

The process that follows the printing itself, such as laminating, trimming, creasing, stapling or binding.

LAMINATION

A thin film coating that protects the printed surface, available in either matt or gloss finish.

LANDSCAPE

The orientation of a page that has the long edge along the top. This is the alternative to portrait.

OFFSET LITHOGRAPHY (Litho) PRINTING

Offset lithography is a process used for printing on a flat surface, using printing plates. An image is transferred to a printing plate, to a rubber blanket and then the image is transferred again to the paper. Generally the printing will be done out of the standard four-colour process or pantone spot colours. Litho printing is best suited for larger runs due to the costs involved in creating plates.

PANTONE (Spot colours)

Pantone is a system of colour matching produced by Pantone Incorporated that is used by printing services all over the world. Each pantone colour (spot) has a unique reference number which is mixed using printing inks to create the desired colour. For example: Sainsbury's orange & Marks and Spencer's green will have a pantone reference number which they use throughout the whole of their branding. This assures the correct colour is printed on all items.

PAPER SIZES

'A' paper sizes are part of the ISO paper sizing system recognised by printing services everywhere. All 'A' sizes have the same proportions the largest is A0 and the smallest is A7.

A0 = 841mm x 1189mm

A1 = 594mm x 841mm

A2 = 420mm x 594mm

A3 = 297mm x 420mm

A4 = 210mm x 297mm

A5 = 148.5mm x 210mm

A6 = 105mm x 148.5mm

A7 = 74mm x 105mm

Business Card – 85mm x 55mm

Compliment Slip or 1/3rd A4 – 99mm x 210mm

PDF (portable document format)

This file retains all of the intended information in a stable layout format created using Adobe Acrobat software.

PORTRAIT

The orientation of a page that has the short edge along the top this is the alternative to landscape.

PRINT READY OR CAMERA-READY ARTWORK

A phrase used in printing that refers to finished artwork that is ready to be printed. Print ready artwork would not require us to make any adjustments at all.

PROCESS COLOUR (4 colour)

Process colour printing is printed using a litho press which uses four inks (cyan, magenta, yellow, and black). This means that the artwork is separated onto four different printing plates and each plate prints a specific single colour – cyan, magenta, yellow and black (CMYK). Together these colours combine to create a full-colour print, just like you see in magazines and photographs.

PROOF

A test version of a page or document produced to show you what the finished product will look like. You will not get a proof if you supply your own artwork unless you specify you would like one.

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VECTOR vs RASTER IMAGE

Vector images use mathematical equations to define each component of an image. This allows vector images to retain their high-quality at any size. When possible, use vector graphics created in a desktop publishing program. A raster image is composed of a collection of tiny dots called pixels. When these pixels are small, and placed close together, they fool the eye into forming a single image. Raster images work well when subtle gradations of colour are necessary. Because they contain a fixed number of pixels, a major disadvantage of raster images is that their quality suffers when they are enlarged or otherwise transformed.

