



Common Printing Terms

DESCRIPTION: The name of the printed piece you need the quote for (e.g., book, brochure, catalog...).

QUANTITY: How many do you need. It is a good idea to list 3 quantities, as the unit pricing is better once the press and running.

NUMBER OF PAGES: This is different from how many sheets of paper. A single piece of paper has two sides and therefore is two pages.

TRIM SIZE FOLDED: The size of the printed item once folded. (Example: if you fold a letter to fit an envelope, the folded size is the "trim size" folded, or 3 2/3 x 8 1/2" from the 8.5 x 11" original size.)

FLAT/SPREAD SIZE: This is the flat and final trimmed size of the printed item before folding. (Example: an 8 1/2 x 11" 4-page brochure spread out as a 2-page "spread" would be 17 x 11".) Printers require the width as the first dimension given.

TEXT STOCK: A lighter weight stock. If there were not a separate cover, then would be the only paper used (i.e. a "self cover") or if there is a separate heavier cover printed then this would refer to the inside paper.

COVER STOCK: Heavier card type stock and also used for the outside 4 pages of your printed item, should it be different from the text. If it is not, then your printed item is a "self cover".

TEXT INK: Ink that is used for the inner pages of your printed item. This is described by the number of inks you require and the two numbers used are separated by a slash sign /. If the front of your piece has 4 colors and the back has 1, then your piece would be described as 4/1 or "four over one". CMYK (cyan, magenta, yellow and black) is for process printing, such as color photos and Pantone inks also known as spot color, or PMS stands for Pantone Matching System. (Note: always count on a slight variation of color from paper to paper and press to press.

COVER INK: Same as the above, but for the cover portion, if it differs from the text.

COVERAGE %: The amount of ink covering the printed page. Always let the printer know if large solid areas of 100% ink exists on the page.

BLEEDS: The ink prints to the very edge of the paper. When using "bleeds" you must allow for the art to extend 1/8" beyond the page border.

CAMERA READY ART: This is art or copy on a layout board or paper output to be photographed.

COMPOSED FILM: Film which is ready to be "stripped" (pieced) together with other pieces of composed film to make "plate ready" film.

OUTPUT READY DISK: A complete disc not requiring further production other than to "rip" to film or plate if on a digital press. It should also contain folders for all of your images fonts used.

SCANS: Scanning is the process that records your images as a digital file from your photograph.

HALF TONES: A black and white photo shot with a camera.

DESIGN: Combining your type, images, colors logo and other items into a finished eye pleasing piece.

BLUELINES: A contact proof from the film used to verify that the film is correct. The word comes from the blue paper used.

COLOR KEY: A contact proof from the film made from acetate. There is one sheet per process color, which is overlaid with each other to verify that your color film, is correct.

MATCHPRINT: A multiple piece of contact proofing that is pieced together and laminated as a single piece.

DIE SCORE OR CUT: A "steel rule" die is manufactured, which is composed of thin pieces of steel that will be used to stamp a line or rule on the printed materiel. To die cut is to cut the printed piece almost like a cookie cutter. An example of this is a "pocket folder".

FOLD TYPE: The type of fold used to complete your print job. A letter fold is a paper folded in thirds. A "z" fold differs in that the parts do not overlap but form a Z at the end. A parallel fold is a half fold, double parallel folds in half and then half again vs. a right angle where the second fold is done on a 90 degree angle from the first. Accordion fold is just more panels than the Z and similar. A gate fold is where the two end panels meet in the center with the center panel being the width equal to both end panels and a double gate folds in half towards the center after the initial gate fold.

SADDLE STITCH: Two staples added to the center of the piece on the fold line. This is a typical magazine bind.

PERFECT BIND: A squared off edge and glued pages define this bindery type. An example is your typical "pocket" book.

PERFORATE: Creation of holes either by die or a bindery rolling process for tear outs or coupons.

HOLE: Punching or die cutting holes to allow for binder or other use. Typical is 3 holes, automotive style is 5 holes.

FOIL: To stamp with a metal die a material onto the paper. If the foil touches ink on the piece or is raised by embossing, it is called "registering".

EMBOSS: To die stamp the paper from the rear in order to create a raised effect.

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