

Printing Terms

ACCORDION FOLD - Sometimes called a "Z" fold, this bindery term means two or more parallel folds which open like an accordion.

ADOBE ACROBAT - Software package created by Adobe for converting any document to an Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) file. Anyone can open your document across a broad range of hardware and software using the downloadable, free software Adobe Acrobat Reader, and it will look exactly as you intended—with layout, fonts, links, and images intact. (Taken from www.adobe.com.) Click [here](#) to download software which allow you to create PDF files for free.

ADOBE TYPE 1 FONT - See postscript font.

AGAINST THE GRAIN - Printing at right angles to the direction of paper grain. This will cause folding problems. One way to work around folding against the grain is to score the paper before folding.

AQUEOUS COATING - An environmentally friendly alternative to UV coating, it's a clear, fast-drying water-based coating that is used to help protect printed pieces. Aqueous coating is available in high-gloss or matte finishes and help to deter dirt, scuffing, and fingerprints depending on the colors and design of your project.

ATTACHMENT - When referring to e-mail, an electronic file placed within an e-mail for the purpose of sending through the Internet.

BANDING - When the changes from screen percentage to screen percentage in a gradient can be seen, instead of a solid blending from dark to light or from color to color.

BIND - To fasten sheets or signatures with wire, thread, glue, or by other means.

BINDERY - Where materials go for assembly. Cutting, folding, binding and boxing are some of the activities performed in bindery.

BLEED - Ink which prints beyond the trim edge of the page, created for the purpose of allowing ink to extend to the edge of the page after trimming. Without bleed, cutting the product becomes extremely difficult and may sacrifice the quality of the product. For best results, create 1/8" (.125) bleed (past trim edge) on all edges where bleed is desired.

BLIND DEBOSSING - An image pressed into a sheet without ink or foil, creating a lowered area. See blind embossing, debossing and embossing.



BLIND EMBOSSING - An image pressed into a sheet without ink or foil, creating a raised area. See blind debossing, embossing and debossing.

BLUELINE - A blue photographic proof used to check position of all image elements. Similar to a blueprint. Universal does not utilize this type of proof; instead, a color, full-size, low-resolution proof is output for our clients.

CAMERA-READY COPY - An archaic term meaning print-ready, mechanical art.

CARBONLESS - Pressure sensitive writing paper that does not use carbon paper.

CENTER JUSTIFIED - Type that is justified to the center of the left and right margins; the line lengths vary on both sides.

COLLATE - A finishing term for gathering paper in a precise order.

COLOR BAR - A line of colored blocks in a row or a single color placed at the tail of a press sheet and used to measure the density of color across the width of a press sheet.

COLOR CORRECTION - Improving color separations by altering either the electronic file or the amount of color burned onto a plate or the amount of ink applied to a press sheet.

COLOR MATCHING SYSTEM - A system of formulated ink colors used for communicating color.

COLOR SEPARATIONS - The process of preparing artwork, photographs, transparencies, or computer-generated art for printing by separating color into the four primary printing colors: cyan, magenta, yellow and black.

COMB BIND - To plastic comb bind by inserting the comb into punched holes.

COMPUTER-TO-PLATE - Also known as CTP. The process by which plates are created using information sent to a direct-to-plate device from a computer, bypassing film. [Click here to find out why this process is better.](#)

CRASH NUMBER - Numbering paper by pressing an image on the first sheet which is transferred to all parts of the printed set.

CROP - To cut off parts of a picture or image.

CROP MARKS - Printed lines showing where to trim a printed sheet.

CYAN - One of four standard process colors. The icy blue color.

DEBOSSING - Pressing an image into paper so that it will create a lowered area.



DENSITOMETER - A quality control device used to measure the density of printing ink.

DENSITY - The degree of color or darkness of an image or photograph.

DIE - Metal rule or imaged block used to cut or place an image on paper in the finishing process.

DIE CUTTING - The process of using a die to cut images in or out of paper.

DIGITAL PRINTING - Printing performed on a digital copier, such as a laser color copier or Docutech.

DIGITAL PROOF - A proof delivered electronically, as opposed to physically. The most typical example is a .pdf proof.

DOT GAIN OR SPREAD - A term used to explain the difference in size between the dot on film versus the dot on paper.

DOUBLE BURN - Exposing a plate to multiple images.

DUOTONE - A halftone picture made up of two printed colors.

E-COMMERCE - The convenient process of ordering products and services online.

E-MAIL - Abbreviation for electronic mail.

ePRINT - An abbreviation for electronic printing, this is what Universal calls their online ordering system which some customers can use to order products online.

EMBOSSING - Pressing an image into paper so that it creates a raised area.

EMULSION - Light-sensitive coating found on printing plates and film.

FLOOD - To cover a printed page with ink, varnish or plastic coating completely.

FOIL - A metallic or pigmented coating on plastic sheets or rolls used in foil stamping and foil embossing/debossing.

FOIL EMBOSS/DEBOSS - Foil stamping and embossing/debossing an image on paper with a die.

FOIL STAMPING - Using a die to place a metallic or pigmented image on paper.

4-COLOR PROCESS - See process color.

FRENCH FOLD - Two folds at right angles to each other.



FTP - An acronym meaning File Transfer Protocol. The process of sending or receiving files electronically through the Internet. Not to be confused with attaching an attachment to an e-mail, FTP is performed using an FTP client (software) or a Web page with FTP capabilities.

FULL JUSTIFICATION - Type that is justified to the right and left margins, creating no variation between line lengths on either end; except the last line, which is left justified.

GHOSTING - A faint printed image that appears on a printed sheet where it was not intended. More often than not, this problem is a function of graphical design. It is hard to tell when or where ghosting will occur. Sometimes, you can see the problem developing immediately after printing the sheet, other times the problem occurs while drying. However the problem occurs, it is costly to fix, if it can be fixed. Occasionally, it can be eliminated by changing the color sequence, the inks, the paper, changing to a press with a drier, printing the problem area in a separate pass through the press, or changing the racking (reducing the number of sheets on the drying racks).

GLOSS - A shiny look, reflecting light.

GRADIENT - A transition of color, creating a blended change between screen percentages of a single color or between two different colors.

GRAIN - The direction in which the paper fiber lie.

GRIPPER - A clamp-like device which grabs the front of the press sheet and pulls it through the press. Also refers to the edge of the press sheet which leaves the press first.

HALFTONE - Converting a continuous tone to dots for printing.

HARD COPY - The output of a computer printer, or typed text sent for typesetting.

HICKEY - Reoccurring, unplanned spots that appear in the printed image from dust, lint or dried ink.

IMAGE AREA - Portion of paper on which ink can appear.

IMPOSITION - Positioning printed pages so they will fold in the proper order.

IMPRESSION - Putting an image on paper.

IMPRINT - Adding copy to a previously printed page.

INDICIA - Postal information placed on a printed product.

JUSTIFICATION - The act of specifying how a block of type will look on a page. See left justified, right justified, center justified, and full justification.

KISS DIE CUT - To cut the top layer of a pressure-sensitive sheet and not the backing. Sticker sheets use this technique.

KNOCK OUT - To mask out any area of ink.

LEFT JUSTIFIED - Type that is justified to the left margin and the line lengths vary on the right.

MAGENTA - One of the basic colors in process color. The pink color.

MAKEREADY - All the activities required to prepare a press for printing.

MASK - Blocking light from reaching parts of a printing plate.

MATCHPRINT - The process of using gels or naps to create a color proof which accurately represents how a job will look when printed on press when printed in 4-color process. There are some spot color gels, but the selection is extremely limited and may not be a true representation. Universal does not utilize this type of proof; instead, a color, full-size, high-resolution proof is output for our clients. See ORIS.

MATTE - A dull look, reflecting light poorly.

OCR - (Optical Character Recognition) The machine recognition of printed characters. OCR systems can recognize many different OCR fonts, as well as typewriter and computer-printed characters. Some advanced OCR systems can also recognize hand writing.

OFFSET PRINTING - Printing performed on a traditional printer, where plates mounted onto rollers are used to transfer ink onto paper.

OFFSETTING - Using an intermediate surface used to transfer ink. Also, an unpleasant happening when the images of freshly printed sheets transfer images to each other.

OPACITY - The amount of show-through on a printed sheet. The more opacity—or the thicker the paper—the less show-through.

OPENTYPE™ FONT - OpenType is a new cross-platform font file format developed jointly by Adobe and Microsoft. The two main benefits of the OpenType format are its cross-platform compatibility (the same font file works on Macintosh and Windows computers), and its ability to support widely expanded character sets and layout features, which provide richer linguistic support and advanced typographic control. (Taken from www.adobe.com.) On a Windows machine, OpenType fonts have the extension .otf.

ORIS - 1) The proofing system Universal uses to output its contract proofs.2) What Universal calls the press proofs output through the ORIS system.



OVERRUN - Copies printed in excess of the specified quantity.

OVERS - See overrun.

PAGE COUNT - Total number of pages in a book, including blanks.

PDF - See Adobe Acrobat.

PERFECT BIND - A type of binding that glues the edge of sheets to a cover, i.e. a telephone book, an Adobe software manual, or Country Living Magazine.

PLATE - An object, onto which an image is burned using light, which is placed onto a press for the use of printing ink onto paper.

PMS - The abbreviated name of the Pantone Color Matching System.

POINT - For paper, a unit of thickness equaling 1/1000 inch; for typesetting, a unit of height equaling 1/72 inch.

POSTSCRIPT - The computer language most recognized by printing devices.

POSTSCRIPT FONT - As opposed to TrueType and OpenType™ fonts, postscript fonts contain two files: a screen font and a printer font. When sending to your printer, please make sure to attach both files. On a Windows machine, postscript files have these extensions: .pfm and .pfb.

PRINTER FONT - The file a computer uses to help the printer print a font correctly. This file is necessary for printer output. Without the printer font, a font may look correct on screen, but will print incorrectly. On a PC, printer fonts have the extension of .pfb.

PROCESS COLOR - The process of using cyan, magenta, yellow and black to build/create any and all colors. The price of printing in process is generally equal to that of printing three spot colors.

PROOF - A print out or mock-up of a job.

PROOFING - When a job has been sent to the proofreader, to the sales representative or customer service representative, or to the client to be looked over.

pURL -an acronym for "Personal URL". Where a standard URL is the web address for the general site, a pURL is a uniquely personalized web page or mini-site specific to one individual or group.
(example: JohnSmith.uppforyou.com)

RAGGED LEFT - Type that is justified to the right margin and the line lengths vary on the left. See right justified.



RAGGED RIGHT - Type that is justified to the left margin and the line lengths vary on the right. See left justified.

REAM - Prepackage cut-size sheets of paper stock; typically 500 sheets for text/writing stock, and 250 sheets for cover stock.

REGISTER - To position print in the proper position in relation to the edge of the sheet and to other printing on the same sheet; Also referred to as registration.

REGISTER MARKS - Cross-hair lines or marks on film, plates and paper that guide strippers, platemakers, pressmen and bindery personnel in processing a print order from start to finish.

RIGHT JUSTIFIED - Type that is justified to the right margin and the line lengths vary on the left.

SADDLE STITCH - Binding a booklet or magazine with staples in the seam where it folds.

SCANNER - Device used to make color separations, halftones, duotones and tritones. Also a device used to scan art, pictures or drawings in desktop publishing.

SCORE - A crease put on paper to help it fold better.

SCREEN - See screen percentage or tints.

SCREEN ANGLES - Frequently, a desktop publisher's nightmare. The angles at which halftones, duotones, tritones and color separation printing films are placed to make them look right.

SCREEN FONT - The file a computer uses to display the font correctly on screen. Without this file, the font may print correctly, but will look incorrect on screen. On a PC, screen fonts have the extension of .pfm.

SCREEN PERCENTAGE - The amount of ink coverage applied. See also tints.

SELF COVER - Using the same paper as the text for the cover.

SIDE STITCH - Binding by stapling along one side of a sheet.

SIGNATURE - A sheet of printed pages which, when folded, become a part of a book or publication.

SPOT COLOR - Ink which has been mixed before printing, creating a solid flood of color more easily matchable from printing to printing.

SPOT VARNISH - Varnish used to highlight a specific part of the printed sheet.

STAMPING - Term for foil stamping.



STOCK - The material to be printed.

STRIPPER - The individual responsible for the positioning of film on a flat prior to platemaking.

STRIPPING - The positioning of film on a flat prior to platemaking.

TAIL - The edge of the press sheet which leaves the press last.

TINTS - A shade of a single color or combined colors.

TRAP - An area where two colors overlap minutely. Trap is used to make sure any shift in printing does not result in areas where paper is seen where there should be ink.

TRIM MARKS - Similar to crop or register marks. These marks show where to trim the printed sheet.

TRIM SIZE - The final size of one printed image after the last trim is made.

TRITONE - A halftone picture made up of three printed colors.

TRUETYPE FONT - As opposed to a postscript font, TrueType fonts are used by both the screen and the printer to display and print the font correctly. On a Windows machine, TrueType fonts have the extension of .ttf.

UV COATING - Liquid laminate bonded and cured with ultraviolet light. Environmentally friendly.

VARNISH - A clear liquid applied to printed surfaces for looks and protection.

WASHUP - Removing printing ink from a press by washing the rollers and blanket. Certain ink colors require multiple washups to avoid ink and chemical contamination.

WIRE O - A bindery trade name for mechanical binding using double loops of wire through a hole.

WIRE-O BINDING - A method of wire binding books along the binding edge that will allow the book to lay flat using double loops. See wire O.

WITH THE GRAIN - Folding or feeding paper into the press or folder parallel to the grain of the paper.

WORK AND TUMBLE - Printing one side of a sheet and turning it over from the gripper to the tail to print the second side using the same side guide and plate for the second side.

WORK AND TURN - Printing one side of a sheet and turning it over from left to right, using the same side guides and plate for the second side.