



# Alabama A. & M. University Glossary of Printing Terms



**ASCII**—Acronym for American Standard Code for Information Interchange; pronounced “ASK-ee.” A code in which the numbers from 0 to 127 represent text and control characters. See also **Text-only document**.

**Bleed**—The result of placing a graphic on the page so that the printing on one or more sides extends off the page edge. Use of bleeds in design requires the use of stock that is wider than the finished size to which the publication will be trimmed

**Blueline Proof** —A copy of a document to be printed that is produced by making a photographic print from the negative that will produce the printing press plate. Bluelines are the final proof available before production begins and are produced to verify the correct placement of graphics and the correct separation of ink colors. Costs of bluelines are typically included in cost estimates for any jobs requiring them. Authors alterations requiring new bluelines will result in additional costs.

**Camera-ready**—A publication that is ready for offset reproduction without modification. Camera-ready copy is ready to be reproduced or photographed to create printing plates. Also see **Mechanical**.

**Case Text** can be lower or uppercase. Historically, upper and lowercase referred to where the pieces of lead type were stored in a printer’s printing case. Today, case refers to the capitalization (or not) of letters in a word. For example, the first letter in this sentence is in the uppercase, and the rest of the letters are in lowercase. In most desktop publishing applications, you can set the case of the text to “Small caps” (capital letters specified to be a percentage of the current point size, typically 70 percent), “All caps,” or “Normal” (all letters restored to the case they were when originally typed or placed on the page). Research indicates that mixed upper- and lowercase characters produce the most easily read text; authors who attempt to force text into the reader’s eye by using all uppercase text usually achieve the opposite.

**Composite Proof** —The black-and-white proof of the publication or, for a color publication, one sheet per publication page (rather than separate sheets for each overlay) printed on a color printer. Because of variations in the parent/source ink colors on color printers and color presses, colors on composite proofs usually do not match precisely the color of the final product but are useful to verify color placements and positions. See also **Match Print**.

**Crop Marks**—The fine, intersecting lines that mark the finished edges of a page on an oversized press sheet. If the page size is smaller than the paper size, crop marks are used to trim the pages

**Desktop Publishing**—Is neither “desktop” nor “publishing.” The term is used to describe the use of computer hardware and software to generate materials to be printed on presses or duplicated on copiers.

**Document**—Whatever you create with application programs—a file you can open, modify, view or save. Compare **File**.

**File**—Any named, ordered collection of information stored on a disk. Application programs and operating systems are files. You also make a file when you create a document, give it a name, and save it on a disk.

**Flush left (ragged right)** —Flush left is a paragraph alignment in which the text abuts the left margin and has a ragged right margin—sometimes referred to simply as “left” or “left justified.” See also **Justify**.

**Flush right (ragged left)** —Flush right is a paragraph alignment in which the text abuts the right margin and has a ragged left margin—sometimes referred to simply as “right” or “right justified.” See also **Justify**.

**Font**—The same meaning as **Typeface** to traditional typesetters. A collection of letters, numbers, punctuation marks, and other typographical symbols with a consistent appearance, size and style; the size and style can be changed readily

**Font Size**—Normally, font size reflects the space between the tallest ascender and lowest descender in a given size font. Exact font description criteria vary according to the font designer. Font sizes are measured and described in points, with each point equal to 1/72 of an inch. This sentence is set in 9-point type while. See also **Point**.

**Format**—Format refers to the overall ordering and layout of material. Paragraph formats usually include alignment, margins and tab settings. Character formats include font, type style, font size and other style attributes.

**Galley Proof** —A copy of the text of a publication before it has been arranged in page formats. Gallies are the first proof stage and are used to verify correct keyboarding. Costs of galley proofing are normally included in cost estimates for jobs requiring them. Keyboarding errors by the printer are converted free of charge while author's alterations are billed based on the time and materials needed to make them.

**Graphics**—Information presented in the form of pictures, line art or other non-text images. Compare **Text**.

**Gutter**—The white space between columns. A standard gutter width is one pica, or 12 points (0.167").

**Hairline**—A .25-point or thinner rule is called a hairline. See also **Rule**.

**Halftone**—Black-and-white photographs are typically printed as dot patterns, enabling proper contrast and detail (compare with a xerographic copy of a photo). The dot patterns are produced by photographing the photograph through two dot-pattern screens. The greater the number of dots available in the screen, the higher the resolution of the final product will be. University standards usually mandate the use of at least 150 lines per inch (lpi) screens for halftones in publications that will be used off campus. Costs of producing halftones vary from printer to printer.

**Hard Return**—Made by pressing the return key. A hard return, or carriage return, creates a line break and identifies the end of a paragraph.

**Justify**—To justify a line of text is to fit the line to a box or column width, so that the text will have uniform left and right margins.

**Leading**—Pronounced "LED-ing"—the space between lines.

**Line Spacing**—A traditional typesetting term for leading.

**Match Print**—Match prints are composite photographs of color separations made by exposing film through the four negatives of the separation. Match prints represent the best pre-press method of verifying the trueness of color separations. Their use incurs an additional expense.

**Mechanical**—The artwork and type of a future publication prepared in hard-copy, paper media. When the mechanical has finished its development, it is camera ready. See also **Camera-ready**.

**Negative**—Photographic film, prepared either from the desktop publishing file or by photographing the mechanical, used to create a printing plate that will be mounted on a press for printing.

**Orientation**—The position of text on a page. "Tall" (portrait) orientation means the text is taller than it is wide. "Wide" (landscape) orientation means the text is wider than it is tall.

**Page Proof**—A copy of the pages of a publication with the text materials in position and with indications of where other graphic elements will appear. One set of page proofs is normally included in cost estimates of projects which require them. New proofs needed as a result of customer changes are billed on a time-and-materials basis.

**Pasteup**—The process of placing text and graphics in position on the mechanical.

**Perfect Binding**—Any of several processes wherein glue is applied to the edges of collated sets to affix those sheets at the common side so that the set may be paged through, as in a book. Printing services provides on-campus perfect binding from 15 sheets of bond paper to 125 sheets of bond paper.

**Pica**—Pica is a base unit of measurement in American typography, equal to 1/6th of an inch, used in composition and typesetting for describing sizes other than type characters, e.g., page width, gutters, margins, etc. See also **Point**.

**Plates**—Images of the material to be printed that are produced by passing high intensity light through a negative onto a specially prepared metal or paper sheet. The resulting plate is placed on the press and functions by transferring ink onto a rubber blanket that, in turn, transfers the ink onto the stock (paper) that is the publication.

**PMS Color**—Pantone Mixing System (PMS) is the most popular standard for describing the rainbow of ink colors that can be produced for publications. Each varying shade of a color is identified by its corresponding number. The University's

official maroon, for example, is identified and referenced as PMS 202. About a half dozen “parent” colors (combinations of which produce all the others) are available at little additional cost. Mixing costs for other colors vary from printer to printer. See also **Washup**.

**Point**—Standard unit of measure used to specify type sizes. One point is 1/72 inch (approx. .013837 inch). This text is set in 10-point type.

**Positive**—Photographic film used to create a printing plate that contains an image of the page in which the dark and light areas of the page match the original. See also **Negative**.

**Ragged right, Ragged left**—See **Flush right, Flush left**.

**Registration Mark**—Marks, printed in the page margin, that show the printer where to align color overlays or separations in the publication.

**Resolution**—Refers to the accuracy of reproduction and distinctness of visual elements, defined in dots per inch (dpi). The more dots per inch, the finer the resolution.

**Reverse type**—Reverse is a descriptive term used to describe light letters on a dark background.

**Rules**—Vertical and horizontal rules are lines that are used as graphic elements on a typeset page. Rules smaller than one-half point should not be set unless the document will be printed on a high resolution output device. See also **Hairline**.

**Saddle Stitching**—Stapling at the fold that creates a bound set of sheets, as in a newsletter of more than four pages. While universal definitions do not exist, a newsletter usually becomes a booklet when a heavier stock is used for the outside pages as a cover.

**Sans Serif**—Without serifs. This text is set in Arial, which is one of the many fonts without serifs. Times is an example of a serif font family. The Times M looks like this: M. See also **Serif**.

**Scanned Graphic**—A bit-mapped graphic created using hardware that converts a two- or three-dimensional image to a collection of dots and stores it in a file format such as TIFF so an electronic publishing application can read the graphic document directly from the disk.

**Scanner**—A hardware device that reads information from a photograph or other graphic and converts it into a computer-readable bit-mapped image.

**Screen**—Screens of varying percentages (size and density of dots) are often used to highlight text areas through overprinting. Screens are readily available in ten percent increments. Experience thus far indicates that screens applied to text via desktop publishing applications tend to reproduce poorly. It is therefore recommended that areas to be screened be clearly marked for mechanical application of screens in the manual stripping process. See also **Halftone**.

**Separations**—The four screens corresponding to the percentages of cyan, magenta, yellow and black used to define colors that are used to create the final printed colors, usually for a color photograph.

**Stripping**—Positioning negatives for the purpose of creating printing plates.

**Text format**—The way text looks as defined by its type specifications.

**Text-only Document**—Text created and saved in one software application, without type specifications or other formatting, for later transfer and formatting in a different application. Text-only documents can be read directly from disk for electronic document preparation applications. Text of this type is sometimes called ASCII text.

**Typeface**—See **Font** and **Font size**.

**Version**—A number indicating the release edition of a particular piece of software.

**Washup**—The process of cleaning one color of ink from the rollers and other parts of an offset press in preparation for running a different color. Costs for washups vary according to press sizes and the amount of time required. See also **PMS Color**.