

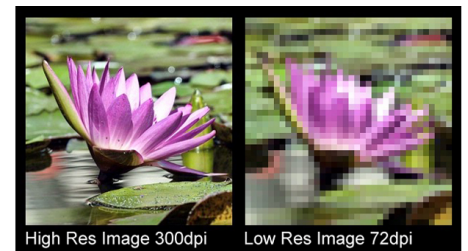
Printing **FAQ**

frequently asked questions

Just like anyone else, we in the print industry seem to get the same couple of questions all time. Our goal is to be a resource for our clients and for those interested in print in general so we personally love the inquisitive folks who just can't get enough information about print! To jump start your learning process, here are a few of the top questions we get at our shop everyday.

Q: What is image resolution?

A: Image resolution is measured in dots per inch (dpi) and can actually be one of the trickiest parts of selecting an image for your project. Just because an image looks great on your screen doesn't mean that it will show up crisp and clean when it is printed. Computer monitors often show images at a resolution of 72 dpi whereas we print at 300 dpi. This is why an image that you thought looked great on your monitor can look smudged and fuzzy on paper.

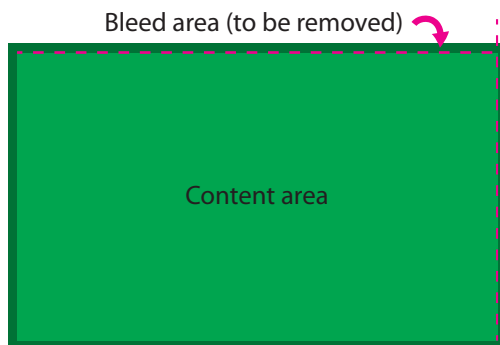


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Why 300 dpi? Because the more dots of color you can get on the page, the more clear and sharp your image will be. Imagine trying to draw a detailed image with a crayon versus a fine-tipped pen. The smaller the dot, the more detail you can achieve.

Q: What is “bleed”?

A: Don't worry; the print industry isn't trying to steal you blood. When we say we need bleed on a piece, it means that we need excess artwork around the edges to ensure that your images go all the way to the edge of the sheet.



To create bleed, you simply add .125” of extra artwork around each edge of your document. After the piece is printed, this extra area is cut off to achieve the final size of the piece. Adding bleed ensures that there is no white space between your artwork and the edge of the sheet. But remember - bleed gets cut off so don't put any text or important elements that you want to appear on the final piece in the bleed area.

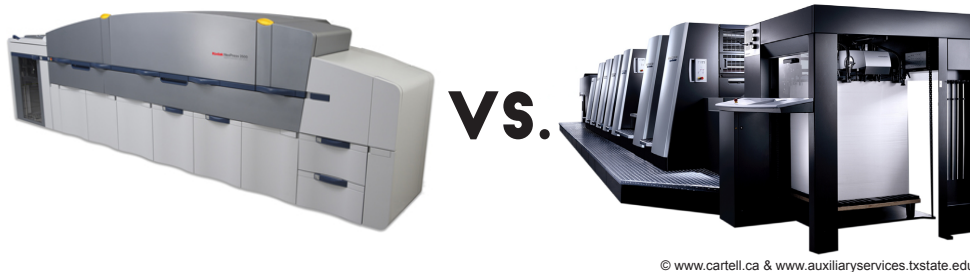
Q: Should I use coated or uncoated stock?

A: This question is really more about personal preference. Coated paper typically has a glossy or matte finish, depending on the type you choose. Coated stock is more resistant to dirt, water, and everyday wear-and-tear and is great for anything that needs a shiny finish. Coated stock also lets less ink absorb into the paper meaning that it is ideal for complicated, crisp images because there's less danger of the inks bleeding into one another.

Uncoated stock, on the other hand, is usually preferred for a more elegant feel. Colors look more rich and full on uncoated stock because it allows more ink to absorb into it. Uncoated stock also comes in a huge variety of textures and finishes, making it incredibly versatile.

Q: What is digital versus offset printing?

A: Offset printing is the more traditional way to print materials. Offset presses use plates put onto huge rollers to make an impression of the image on the paper (imagine a huge stamp). Offset printing is great for large quantities because it can print more efficiently and on large sheets. Offset printing is also capable of creating pieces with far more detail in them than would otherwise be possible on a digital press.



Digital printing follows a similar concept but on a much smaller and more easily manageable scale. Digital printing is great for small quantities where

exceptional detail is not required. It also has the huge advantage of being able to produce pieces with variable data printed right on them. This can be a huge saving in terms of cost and time when printing mailers, customized letters, brochures, etc.

Q: Is print still relevant in the digital world?

A: Of course! In fact, print is thriving in the digital world. Because we are so deeply entrenched in computer technology, people have come to appreciate the tactile “realness” of printed pieces even more. Printed pieces also feel more trustworthy to consumers since, unlike in the digital world, companies cannot just “delete” a mail piece they later regret and pretend like it never existed. Having physical evidence of a company or individual’s identity makes people feel like they can connect to them more readily than if they had received a generic email.

Just think of it this way: how long do you look at all of the emails (spam or otherwise) that are trying to sell you something? Unless you voluntarily subscribed to a company’s e-newsletter, it’s likely that you spend as long as it’s required to hit the “delete” button. Printed mail, on the other hand, is far more likely to get looked at and read, especially if it has a unique message or an interesting tactile feel. Engaging more senses than just vision definitely pays off when trying to draw in more customers.



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160 Lockhaven Drive | Houston, TX 77073
281.209.9500 | www.BaysidePrinting.com

