The Ultimate Labelling Lingo Resource

Save time, money and your sanity

Hello!

So, you're wanting to get some labels printed. You don't just want any old labels though. You want gorgeous labels that attract the right attention. And you certainly don't want to get ripped off in the process.

But how do you do that?

I've found understanding labels from design through to printing, to be the best way to avoid wasting money and time. There's no need to get stressed out, confused or annoyed. Being 'in the know' with your labels may even stop you from agreeing to pay for something you don't need.

In my **Ultimate Labelling Lingo Resource**, I'm going to give you my guide to understanding label terminology. Plus, I show you the industry standard label artwork structure.

You'll be a label pro in no time.

Renee

Creative Director at Evolve Brand Design

Why bother learning labelling industry terms?

1. More than anything this list will help you save time and money.

2. Imagine paying for labels and when delivered, they're not what's in your head. Don't waste time getting quotes that don't give you the labels you want.

3. Being bamboozled is not good for business. Your label print quote may be full of terms which sound very unfamiliar.

4. Let's face it, printers talk fast. Even when they explain things it's easy to get confused. Then it's easy to agree to paying for something you actually don't need.

5. You don't know what you don't know. But they do. It's what gets left out of the conversation that can get you in the most trouble.

Like not getting labels that are waterproof.

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Labelling Lingo

LABEL PRINT METHODS:

Digital Printing: A modern print method printing a 4 colour process. This is a high-speed print method, uses no printing plates and is generally better for short-runs.

Offset: A traditional printing technique that uses a printing plate to transfer an image to a carrier (cylindrical drum) and then onto the stock/substrate.

LABEL PRINT TERMS:

Continuous Labels: refers to printed labels supplied on a roll.
Professionally printed labels will be supplied this way.

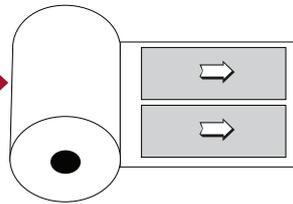**Fan-Folded labels:** refers to printed labels supplied flat.

Pre-cut Labels: supplied at a specified pre-cut size. Sometimes you can get custom sizes.
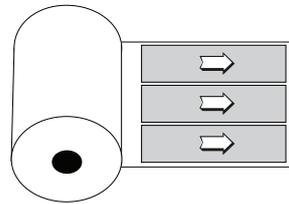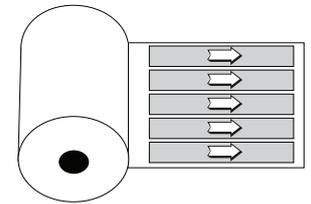
2up (can be any number 'up'): number of labels printed across the width of the label roll.
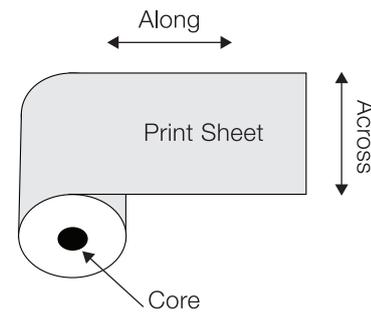
2Up   3Up   5Up

Across: indicates the roll width. The width of the roll dictates how many labels can be placed across the sheet – which impacts the price.

Along

Print Sheet

Across

Core

Core Size: This is the diameter inside label roll. It is important if you are having your labels machine applied. Standard sizes are 19mm, 25mm, 38mm, 40mm and 75mm.

SKU: is the initials for Stock Keeping Units. These are the varients in the range. For example: chocolate, vanilla, strawberry milk.

Substrate (also know as 'stock'): is the material base of the label. There are five main types, see below for more information.

TYPES OF SUBSTRATE (STOCK)

Clear: you can see through the label and is made of polyester or polypropylene.

Compostable paper: made with sugar cane paper and adhesives that have been engineered to separate from the pulp during the recycling process. This is a new product, not offered by all printers.

Metalised: chrome finish similar to stainless steel and is made of polyester or polypropylene.

Paper: can be coated and uncoated.

White: available in both matte and glossy surfaces and is made of polyester, polypropylene or vinyl.

TYPES OF ADHESIVE:

Freezer Adhesive: can withstand extremely cold temperatures without peeling or cracking whilst still holding to the surface.

Permanent Adhesive: is made to be non-removable. It is the most common and least expensive.

Removable Adhesive: the label peeled off it is not destroyed, the adhesive stays with the label, not the surface. This label can adhere again on to another surface.

Semi-Permanent Adhesive: behaves like a removable label at first but after a few days becomes permanently fixed to the surface. Also called a repositionable adhesive.

COLOURS:

CMYK: Standard colour reference for all digital print and offset print methods.
Initials stand for: C - cyan, M - magenta, Y - yellow, B - black.

RGB: Standard colour reference for screens (tv, computer, phone).
Initials stand for: R - red, G - green, B - blue.

HEX: Standard colour reference for web designers. Hex colours are a combination of six numbers and letters defined the RGB values. For example:

#e9a6ca

PMS: Pantone Matching System are specialty ink pigments mixed to an exact colour. Used in traditional print methods, PMS colours can be printed on their own, with other PMS colours or with CMYK colours. PMS colour chip looks like this:

PMS
032

Spot Colour: this is another way of saying PMS colours. They can be used in addition to CMYK printer process to enhance labels and achieve metallic and more intense colours.

ARTWORK TERMS YOU ARE LIKELY TO ENCOUNTER:

Artwork (also known as 'Art' or 'Print Ready Artwork'): this is the 'very important' file the printer needs to print the label. If it includes images, they need to be high resolution. Label artwork is usually produced in Adobe Illustrator.

Artwork Specifications (or Specs): indicates how the printer would like the artwork to be provided. All printers have slight variations to their preferred file setup.

Bleed: the overflow design area outside the dieline. Usually 3-5mm wide. See page 7.

Clearance: the space between your label design/text and the cutting knife. Allow 2mm in case of movement on the press. See page 7.

Convert all fonts to outlines: Make the font into vector paths so it is no longer a font. 'Outlines' is sometimes also referred to as curves.

Crop Marks: these show the printer where to cut the paper or adhesive, see page 7.

Dieline: used to cut the labels this is the cutting knife. It can be made to any shape. Square and rectangle shapes are cheaper than fancy shapes. See page 7.

Embedded Images: when photos are included in a design or artwork file then incorporated into the document. The size of the file will increase.

Hi Res Artwork: translates to 'high resolution artwork' and means that the file has been prepared for print purposes. Usually at 300dpi.

Keyline: same as a dieline.

Low Res Artwork: translates to 'low resolution artwork' and means that the file has been prepared for digital purposes not for print. Usually at 150dpi.

Trapping: small outline on the fonts and graphics to ensure the colours have a tiny little overlap - this avoids white hairlines showing through the design.

Placed Images: mean photos have been positioned in a design or artwork file.

White under print: a layer of white ink can be printed onto metalised label stock to prevent the whole label from being shiny. Nice for highlighting something!
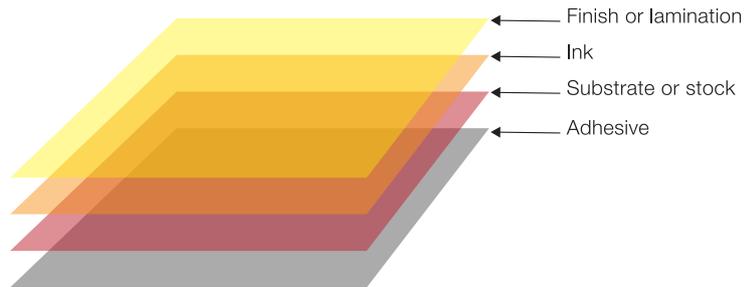
HOT TIP:

You can see how the white under print allows gold highlights to stand out.

Industry Standard Label Artwork Structure

LABEL LAYERS

A label is not as simple as it sounds. A label is usually about 0.2mm - 0.4mm thick and the structure is made of 4 layers:

Finish or lamination
Ink
Substrate or stock
Adhesive

1. The top coat: finish or lamination.
2. The ink which prints your gorgeous design
3. The substrate (also known as stock)
4. The sticky bit: adhesive

Each one of these layers has variations that affect the outcome of your label.

LABEL LAYOUT STRUCTURE

Typically label artwork is prepared in Adobe Illustrator CC and supplied to the printer in a pdf format. 'Print read artwork' will have all fonts converted to outlines and high resolution placed images will be embedded.

HOT TIP:

The artwork file needs either a dieline or crop marks. Not both. It depends on how the labels will be cut.

Crop Marks
Clearance
Dieline
Bleed
Design Area
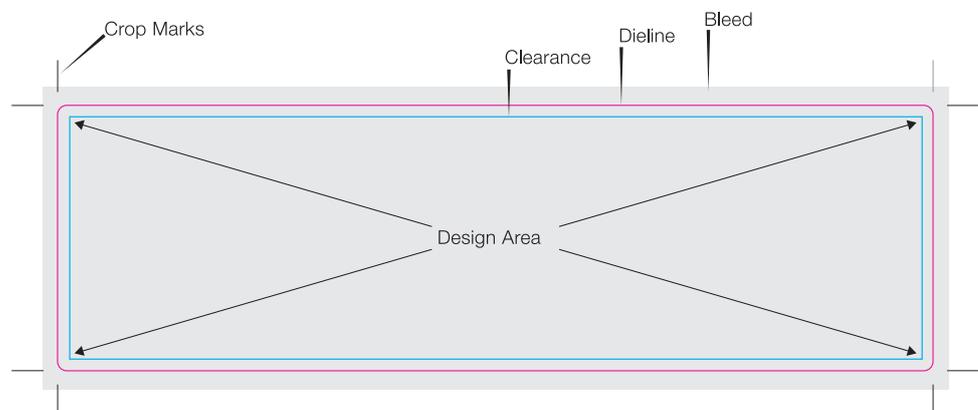
So now you know how to ask the right questions when you're talking to a label designer or printer.

You can refer to your **Ultimate Labelling Lingo Resource** whilst knowing how label artwork is structured with confidence.

If you want to know more about designing a label you should check out my label templates. Or else, email me directly about custom designed labels: renee@evolvebranddesign.com or call on 0419 731 460.

Renee

Lord of the Labels at Evolve Brand Design

BASIC LABEL TEMPLATES
(click image to learn more)

PREMIUM LABEL TEMPLATES
(click image to learn more)

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