

The Austin Tape

Glossary of Terms for Pressure Sensitive Labels

Term	Description
Accelerated Aging	Procedures for subjecting pressure sensitive label stock to special environmental conditions in order to predict the course of natural aging.
Acetate Film	A clear film made from cellulose acetate.
Acrylic Adhesive	Pressure sensitive adhesive based on high strength, acrylic polymers. Can be coated as a solvent or emulsion system.
Acrylic Emulsion	A water-based latex made with acrylic polymers, used in coatings and adhesives.
Adhesion	The state in which two surfaces are held together by interfacial forces. Measure of the strength with which one material sticks to another.
Adhesion, Ultimate	The mature or final bond achieved, under controlled conditions, between ink, coating or adhesive to any flexible or rigid substrate.
Adhesive	A substance capable of holding materials together by surface attachment.
Adhesive, Cold Temperature	An adhesive that will induce a bond to cold surfaces in a cold environment.
Adhesive, Permanent	An adhesive characterized by relatively high ultimate adhesion. Sometimes it can be removed when the degree of force used overcomes its bonding ability but generally it is not removable.
Adhesive, Removable	An adhesive characterized by relatively high cohesive strength and low ultimate adhesion. It can be removed easily from most surfaces. Some adhesive transfer could take place depending on the affinity of the adhesive to the surface.
Anchor Coat	A coating applied to the surface of a substrate to effect or increase the adhesion of subsequent coatings; primer, tie coat or pre-coat.
Application	Refers to a pressure sensitive label actually being adhered to a product.
Application Temperature	Temperature at the time the label is applied. Most adhesives have a minimum application temperature rating. Testing is recommended when approaching this temperature.
Applicator	A device that automatically feeds and applies pressure sensitive labels to a product.
Artwork	The original design including drawings and text produced by the artist. All elements of the design from which the black and white art and printing plates are made. Also refers to all elements of the black and white production art.
Back Printing	Refers to printing on the underside of a pressure sensitive substrate or laminate, i.e. on the adhesive or back of liner.
Back Split	See split back.
Backing	Refers to the carrier sheet of material in a pressure sensitive lamination as opposed to the face material. Usually has a release coating applied so that the adhesive will not stick too tightly to it. Release liner, backing paper, carrier, etc.
Bar Code	In optical reading, a system of symbols which identifies data through length, position size or thickness of lines or symbols. Codes are normally machine printed.
Bar Width Reduction	Reduction of the nominal bar width dimension on film masters or printing plates to compensate for printing gain.
Basis Weight	The weight in pounds of a ream of paper cut to a given size. Most backing papers used in pressure sensitive laminations are based on a ream size of 24" x 36"/500's. Face papers are more typically 25" x 38"/500's.
Bonding Strength	In paper, the force with which the fibers adhere to each other. In surface coatings, such as inks and adhesives, the strength with which the dried coating adheres to the surface of the substrate. Also refers to the degree of adhesion of a pressure sensitive face material to any surface.
Brightness	The reflectivity of a sheet of paper for blue light measured under standardized conditions on a particular instrument designed and calibrated specifically for the purpose. Strictly speaking, brightness is not a colorimetric quantity.
Butt Cut Labels	Rectangular labels in continuous form separated by a single knife cut to the liner across the web.
C1S Paper	Abbreviation for coated one side paper.
Cast Coated	A high-gloss enamel finish.
Check Digit	A digit included within a symbol whose value is based mathematically on other characters included in the symbol. It is used for the purpose of performing a mathematical check to ensure the accuracy of the read.
Chemical Resistance	The resistance of a pressure sensitive label to the deteriorating effects resulting from exposure to chemicals under specified conditions.

Term	Description
Clear Coat	A coating that protects the printing and the surface of a pressure sensitive label from abrasion, sunlight, chemicals, moisture, or a combination of these.
Coated Paper	General term applying to all papers which have been surface coated with pigments.
Coating Weight	The weight of a coating per unit area, such as lb/1,000 square feet, lb/ream or grams/sq meter.
Cohesive Strength	A measure of that property of an adhesive which resists forces parallel to the surface, i.e. resistance to adhesive splitting.
Cold Flow	The tendency of a pressure sensitive adhesive to act like a heavy, viscous liquid over long periods of time. Such phenomena as 'oozing' or 'increases in adhesion' are the results of this characteristic.
Cold Temperature Adhesive	An adhesive that will enable a pressure sensitive label to adhere or stick well when applied to a cold substrate, often in cold ambient temperatures.
Color Proof	A printed or simulated printed image of each process color (cyan, magenta, yellow and black) using inks, toners or dyes to give a simulated impression of the final printed reproduction. Color proofs are now most often generated by computer.
Color Separation	The process of separating colored originals into yellow, magenta, cyan and black printing negatives. Mostly done on computer controlled scanners.
Continuous Label	Fan-folded labels manufactured from a continuous web of label stock which is not cut into units prior to execution. Continuous labels are mostly used for data processing applications.
Converter	Refers to that type of manufacturer who produces plain or printed rolls, sheets, bags or pouches, etc., from rolls of film, foil or paper, including pressure sensitives.
Core	A tube on which paper, film, or foil labels are wound for shipment. Also the metal body of a roller which is rubber covered.
Corner Radius	Describes the arc or curvature of the die blades where they meet so that they can impart a rounded corner to a die cut label.
Coupon	Removable label either supplying information or having redeemable value. They may be either pressure sensitive or non-pressure sensitive.
Cyan	A subtractive primary color which reflects blue and green light and absorbs red light.
Delamination	The separation of a material into layers in a direction approximately parallel to the surface. The partial or complete separation of the layers of a laminate.
Densitometer	Instrument that measures reflected or transmitted light. A reflection densitometer is used as a control instrument to check the uniformity and consistency of print color.
Die Cut	To cut labels with a die. A term used to describe a label formed by die-cutting.
Die Cut Label	Pressure sensitive labels mounted on a release liner from which the matrix has been die cut and usually removed.
Die-Cutting	The process of using dies or sharp steel rules to cut any shape for labels.
Die Lines	A hand drawn or computer generated layout of the die cut shape or shapes on a clear or matte finish acetate or mylar.
Direct Thermal	Printing method utilizing heat impinged upon a specially coated substrate so that the heat turns the surface black.
Dispenser	A device that feeds pressure sensitive labels, either manually or automatically, making them ready for application. It can serve as a package for the labels as well (dispenser boxes).
Dot Matrix	Produces its printed image by firing pins or hammers against a ribbon and then onto paper.
EDP	Electronic Data Processing-Pressure sensitive labels, usually blank, for use on computer printing equipment. Webs are usually perforated, fanfolded and hole-punched for pin-wheel feeding.
Electronic Pre-Press	Computer assisted designing of new labels from conceptual through to the separated, stepped films required for plate making.
Elongation	The distance a material will stretch lengthwise before breaking, expressed as a percentage of original length. Elongation is not necessarily an indication of conformability.
Emulsion	A type of mixture wherein two or more immiscible (or unmixable) materials are held together in a homogeneous mixture by the action of a third agent. The term 'emulsifying agent' is applied to the material which is added to hold the emulsion.
Eyemark	A small rectangular printed area usually located near the edge of a web or design, to activate an automatic electronic position regulator for controlling register of the printed design with subsequent equipment or operations.
Face Material	Any paper, film, fabric, laminate or foil material suitable for converting into pressure sensitive label stock. In the finished construction this web is bonded to the adhesive layer and becomes the functional part of the construction.
Face Slit	A slit in the face material of a pressure sensitive produce to facilitate removal from the backing.
Face Split	See face slit.
Fan Fold	See continuous labels.
Film	A transparent material used for face stock for pressure sensitive labels. Often used in applications requiring maximum durability.
Flexographic Printing	Formerly called aniline printing. A method of rotary printing that employs flexible, raised relief image plates and rapid-drying inks.
Flood Coat	The coating of an entire surface with an ink, adhesive, coating, etc.
Fluorescent Paper	A paper that is coated with a fluorescent pigment which not only reflects a visible wave length, but is activated by most of the remaining absorbed light to re-emit it as color of a longer wave length which results in reinforcement of the reflected color.
Foil Paper Laminate	A foil laminated to a sheet of paper used as a face stock. The foil is usually topcoated to improve ink receptivity.
Font	In composition, the complete assortment of type of one size and face.
Four-Color Process	Printing with yellow, magenta and cyan color inks plus black, using screens to create all other colors.
Freezer Adhesives	Adhesives that will function at temperatures below the freezing point. They are usually removable at room temperatures.
Guard Bars	The bars which are at both ends and center of a UPC and EAN symbol. They provide reference points for scanning.
Guillotine	An instrument for trimming sheets of paper (with a downward cutting action).

Term	Description
Halftone	The reproduction of continuous-tone subjects such as photographs through a contact halftone screen, which converts the image into dots with equal spacing and different sizes.
Heat Seal Labels	Label paper that has a coating which melts under heat to form the bonding agent.
High Temperature Adhesive	An adhesive that will enable a pressure sensitive label to adhere or stick well when applied to a hot substrate. Its characteristic will be such as to have a high degree of resistance to aging or deterioration at the elevated temperatures.
Hologram	The pattern on a photosensitive material or embossed into a polymeric film structure resulting from an interference pattern created by a laser light striking an object, then merging with a reference beam of the same light.
Hot Melt Adhesives	Thermoplastic materials with 100% solids that liquefy when heated and resolidify on cooling to form a bond with the face sheet the adhesive was applied to and a pressure sensitive lamination which includes a release coated backing sheet.
Hot Stamping	An image producing method utilizing support film which carries a colored metallic substance which can be transferred using heat and pressure. Most commonly used to create metallic effects.
Initial Tack	Degree of stickiness when a pressure sensitive label is first applied to a product.
Kiss Cut	A die-cutting operation which cuts through the face sheet to a liner but not through the liner.
Knife Cut Labels	See butt cut labels.
Kromekote	A trademark of a clay coated paper with a highly polished, mirror-like finish; high gloss.
Label	The functional portion of a pressure sensitive construction comprising the face material and adhesive, die cut into various shapes.
Label Stock	Pressure sensitive laminate from which labels are produced, usually refers to roll stock.
Labeling Machine	Dispensing apparatus that, by means of driving or pulling the backing, delivers a pressure sensitive label and applies it to a product.
Laminate	A web material formed by bonding two or more materials together as in a pressure sensitive construction. To apply one layer of material over another.
Lamination	A plastic film bonded by heat, adhesive, and/or pressure to a printed web for protection or appearance. Two or more materials bonded together functioning as one.
Laser Paper	Paper suitable to accept laser printing.
Laser Printing	A method of printing which utilizes a laser beam to put images onto a substrate. Usually the surface of the substrate must have specific characteristics to accept laser printing.
Latex Paper	Paper manufactured by two major processes; one of which is where latex is incorporated with the fibers in the beater prior to formation of the sheet, and the second of which is where a preformed web of absorbent fiber is saturated with properly compounded latex. The papers are characterized by strength, folding endurance, resistance to penetration by water, flexibility, durability and resistance to abrasion.
Lay Flat	A label material with good non-curling characteristics making it suitable for automatic overwrapping, insertion or any other form of further processing requiring a flat sheet (stayflat).
Lexan	General Electric Company's trademark for polycarbonate film.
Liner	See backing.
Material Splice	An area where tape has been used to attach two rolls of material together to form one continuous web.
Matrix (Waste Skeleton)	The face material and adhesive surrounding a self-adhesive label usually removed after die-cutting.
Matte Finish	A low-gloss or no-gloss finish. A UV-curable clear coat may also be used to produce a matte or textured finish.
Metal Foil	Thin, flexible layer of metal, such as aluminum, used as face materials. Thinner gauges are often laminated to paper for strength.
Metalized Film	A plastic or resinous film that has been coated on one side with a very thin layer of metal.
Metalized Paper	A label substrate consisting of a lacquered C1S paper on which a very thin film of aluminum has been deposited.
Mylar	DuPont's trademark for clear, tough polymeric polyester film.
Non-Prime Label	A label supplying supportive information to a product or performing any other function.
Ooze	Adhesive moving out of ends of rolls or stacks of sheets causing ends to feel sticky and possibly causing material to block. Adhesive cold flow.
Opacity	The measure of the amount of light that can pass through a material. The hiding property of an ink film; property of film allowing printed material to show through in varying degrees.
Opaque Ink	An ink that is not transparent and reflects only its color regardless of what colors it overprints.
Opaqueness	The degree of opacity.
Opticite Film	Trademark of a label film supplied by Dow Chemical (polystyrene type).
Overlaminating	Application of a clear film to a label stock for the purpose of protection or to enhance graphic quality, usually done in-line on the press.
Pattern Coated	Refers to the width and spacing arrangement of strips of adhesive laid down parallel to machine direction and across the width of pressure sensitive label stock during its manufacture. Also refers to adhesive coating applied in a pattern which is not related to web direction.
Pattern Varnish	Spot varnish applied to the printed surface in a desired pattern.
Peel Adhesion	Peel adhesion is the force required to remove a pressure sensitive label from a standard test panel at a specified angle and speed after the label has been applied to the test panel under specified conditions for a specific time period.
Perforated	Refers to a series of small incisions made in laid-on labels and/or their release liner to facilitate tearing along a pre-determined line, or for fan folding.
Permanent Adhesive	An adhesive characterized by having relatively high ultimate adhesion to a wide variety of surfaces.
Photopolymer	Plate material that is photosensitive and upon exposure, its compounds polymerize to form a tough, abrasion resistant surface which becomes the inking media.
Piggyback	Pressure sensitive constructions that have two release coated liners, two layers of adhesive and a face material which allows a label to be applied, complete with backing, for future or further application.
Plate	The image carrier in letterpress and flexographic printing.
Polycarbonate	A high clarity film having the versatility of acetate with the durability of polyester.

Term	Description
Polyester Liner	A polyester film that is silicone release coated. It provides an excellent die-cutting surface and is also used on overlaminating films to provide a smooth, glass-like surface of adhesive.
Polyester Metalized Film	A clear polyester film, vacuum metalized on one side to provide a metallic look.
Polyester Overlam	A clear, glossy polyester film coated with clear acrylic adhesive. Can also be supplied with a matte surface.
Polyethylene	A tough, stretchy plastic film having very good low temperature characteristics. Also used a great deal for producing semi-rigid recyclable bottles.
Polypropylene	Similar to polyethylene but stronger and having a higher temperature resistance. Various thermoplastic plastics are polymers of propylene; excellent clarity. Also used in various thicknesses in the printing of labels as well as backing or liner materials.
Polystyrene	A thermoplastic produced by the polymerization of styrene. The electrical insulating properties are outstandingly good and the material is relatively unaffected by moisture.
Press Proofs	Printed sections of substrate material made on a press to allow for approval or final corrections before the production printing run is made.
Pressure Sensitive Label Stock	The combination of face material, pressure-sensitive adhesive and release liner from which pressure sensitive labels are manufactured.
Pressure Sensitive Laminate	See pressure sensitive stock.
Pressure Sensitive Tape	A combination of a pressure sensitive adhesive with a carrier. Tapes are either self-wound or utilize release liners or films.
Primary Label	Label that acts as the main identification of a product. Often designed to attract attention and contains information to appeal to a buyer and is usually applied at the time of its manufacture.
Prime Label	A label used to identify and display a product, i.e. a major product panel.
Printability	The ability of a material to accept and hold a printed legend, and especially to resist offset of the printing when rewound into a roll after printing. Also, a collective term used to describe the properties required of all components in the printing process.
Process Printing	Printing from a series of two or more halftone plates to produce intermediate colors and shades. In 4-color process, the colors are yellow, magenta, cyan and black.
Pull Tab	Area on a face stock that facilitates easy removal of the label, usually a cut area on a sheeted label. Also called a peel tab and tear tab.
PVC	Vinyl; polyvinyl chloride.
Release Liner	The component of the pressure sensitive label stock which functions as a carrier for the pressure sensitive label. Prior to application, it protects the adhesive, and readily separates from the label immediately before the label is applied to product.
Removability	A relative term applied to pressure sensitive labels to describe the force or condition under which they can be removed from a substrate. A removable label would be one in which no damage or staining occurs to the substrate or the face material on removal.
Removable Adhesive	A pressure sensitive adhesive characterized by low ultimate adhesion and clean removability from a wide variety of surfaces.
Repositionable Adhesive	A permanent adhesive that can be removed and repositioned for a short, finite time after application.
Reverse Printing	Printing on the underside of a transparent film. Also, a design in which the copy is 'dropped-out' and the background is printed making the copy appear in the color of the background.
Rubber Base Adhesive	Pressure sensitive adhesive based on natural or synthetic rubber. Can be coated as a solvent, hot melt or emulsion system.
Self-Adhesive Products	Converted pressure sensitive labels and products usually carried by a release liner.
Self-Wound	A roll of material with a single liner, which is coated on both sides with a release coating and a carrier having a pressure sensitive adhesive on both sides. Also, a material that has pressure sensitive adhesive applied to one side and then rolled up on itself (no liner).
Semi-Gloss Paper	Coated 1 side litho.
Serial Code	A bar code symbol typically used with a fixed beam scanner where the scanning action is caused by the motion of the symbol past the scanning head. The bits of the symbol are evaluated one at a time as the symbol passes.
Service Temperature	The temperature range that a pressure sensitive label will withstand after 24-72 hours residence time on the labeled surface. The range is expressed in degrees Fahrenheit and/or Celsius.
Silicone	A polymer of organo-siloxane used as an ink additive to aid ink flow out. Also is used for pressure sensitive adhesives capable of withstanding extreme temperatures. A polymeric material with exceptionally high repellency properties towards adhesives used extensively in the coating of release liners.
Slit Back	See split back.
Slit Face	See split face.
Solvent Adhesive	Adhesive components that are dissolved in a variety of organic solvents for coating. Rubbe3r or acrylic based systems can be coated this way.
Solvent Resistance	The resistance of a pressure sensitive label to the action of specific organic liquids. May apply either to adhesive or the printing.
Split Back	Slits in the release liner to facilitate its removal by hand.
Split Face	Slits in face of pressure sensitive product usually for the purpose of facilitating removal from the release coated backing.
Split Liner	See split back.
Spot Varnish	See pattern varnish.
Stain Resistance	The ability of a label to be applied to a surface without discoloring that surface. Also, the ability of a printed label to resist staining due to exposure to the product being labeled.
Static Cling	An induced property of a film which enables it to grab onto a smooth clean surface without using a pressure sensitive adhesive. Static cling is a phrase applied to both mechanical grabbing and grabbing by electrical static.
Stick	Designating adhesion or stickiness.

Term	Description
Tack	The property of a pressure sensitive label which causes it to adhere to a surface instantly with a minimum of pressure and contact time. It is the feeling of stickiness obtained when the surface of an adhesive is touched or when a label is applied to a surface and quickly pulled away.
Tackiness	The stickiness of the adhesive.
Tag Label	Labels on heavy paper or tag stock with die cut holes so labels can be folded over a packaging material as in a header or hanger label.
Tags	Any identification that is only partially affixed to the product/item. System tags: converted through roll-fed production equipment. Merchandise tags: converted through narrow web roll-fed production equipment.
Tamper-Evident Label	A pressure sensitive construction made of materials which will partially destruct, indicating that a package, label or container has been tampered with.
Tamperproof	Destructible. A pressure sensitive material which cannot be removed intact from a substrate thus making reuse of the label impossible.
Tape	A single faced, self-wound, adhesive coated substrate wound on spools for consumer use.
Thermal	Refers to the use of heat in any process.
Thermal Transfer Paper	A face paper specifically designed to accept heat activated ink from the ribbon of a thermal transfer printer.
Topcoat	A surface treatment or coating on a material which enhances ink receptivity. Sometimes refers to a protective coating.
Transfer Tape	A pressure sensitive adhesive, unsupported, applied to a two-side differentially release coated liner.
Tyvek	DuPont's trademark for spun bonded polyolefin material frequently used as a face stock where very high tensile strength is required.
UL	Underwriters Laboratories
Ultimate Adhesion	The maximum adhesion possible from a pressure sensitive adhesive.
UV	The part of the spectrum wherein the wavelength of light is shorter than that of visible light.
UV Ink	Solventless, 100% solids ink that is cured by ultraviolet radiation.
UV Varnish	Lacquer or varnish usually applied over the printed web used as a protective layer that is cured by exposure to a high intensity ultraviolet light source (100% solids).
Varnish	A thin, clear coating of mixtures of natural and synthetic resins and drying oils applied to a printed web for protection or appearance. In inkmaking, it can be part of the ink's vehicle or carrier.
Vignette	An illustration in which the background fades gradually until it blends into the unprinted area.
Vinyl	Synthetic plastic products which can be made in film, sheet or other forms. Vinyls can be manufactured in rigid or flexible constructions. Generally more flexible and formable than polyesters. Also known as PVC or polyvinyl chloride. A tough, durable plastic film having excellent resistance to oils, chemicals and many solvents. It has excellent abrasion-resistance. It can also be colored. Its high stretch is due to the addition of a plasticizer.
Waterborne Adhesive	A dispersion of fine particles in another liquid. Many pressure sensitive adhesives are waterborne or emulsion systems.