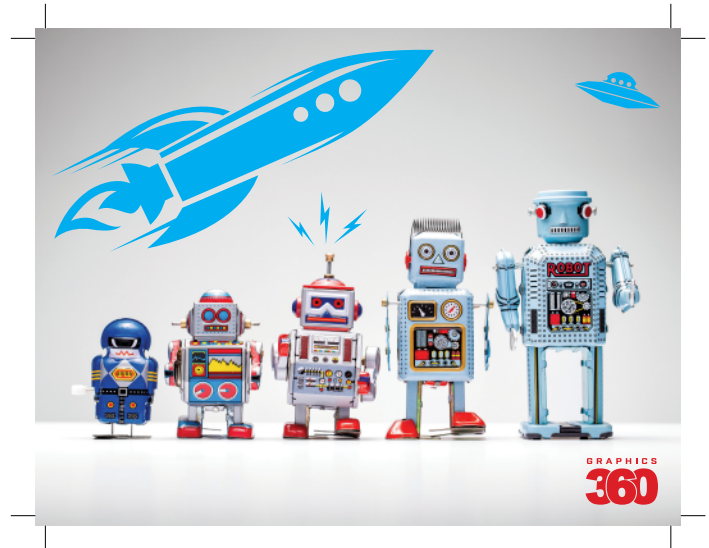


What are Crop Marks?

In printing, Crop Marks are thin lines placed at the corners of an image, page or artwork layout to indicate where the paper should be trimmed after printing. Because Crop Marks designate trim lines, they are sometimes referred to as Trim Marks.

Crop Marks are crucial for any piece that will be trimmed after printing, but especially if any part of the design will bleed. In printing, a bleed means that the printed design extends all the way to one or more edges of the finished document (as opposed to leaving an unprinted margin or blank area along the document's edges).



To create a printed piece with a bleed, the original artwork must extend beyond the desired document size by 1/8" or so. Extending the artwork past the trim size prevents any unprinted paper near the edge of the finished document, which could occur if there was no allowance for bleed and the paper shifted slightly during the trimming process.

Basically, whether there is a bleed or not, any piece that will be trimmed after printing needs Crop Marks. Crop Marks are generally added with the same software used to create the original design. When your printer receives the artwork, it is printed onto paper that is larger than the actual document size desired. Then, using the Crop Marks as a guide, your printer trims the paper down to its final size.

Crop Marks are extremely important to ensure the project is trimmed in the proper place(s) and to the proper size. As a commercial printer, we see a lot of artwork submitted with the crop marks omitted and/or bleeds improperly set up, which unfortunately delays the turnaround time for all involved.

If you are unsure how to properly set up a bleed or add crop marks, you should notify your printer for advice before submitting your artwork for output. This is one area that cannot always be corrected downstream. Give **Graphics 360** a call at **714-979-5000** if you have any questions about the proper use of Crop Marks in an upcoming print project.