



## **Guide to Proofing**

### **Proofing Docs**

Continuing our guide through the processes here this month we take a look at proofing. What it is and how to do it properly. Often many issues that arise are the result of poor proofing, do it right and it will save you time, money and so much hassle. We offer our top tips for proofing and an easy to follow check list and guide so you'll never go wrong again when signing off a job.

### **Proof Reading Guide**

You'll need a print-out of your final approved PDF for reference as you check your printers proof. It's easy to check what's on the proof, but all too often, people don't spot when an element has dropped off completely. Having both in front of you will help avoid this.

### **Get a fresh pair of eyes**

After working at the coal face for some time it's good to get someone else to check, particularly when it comes to proofing text. It's easy to skim over words or fill in the blanks if something's missing when you're reading it for the hundredth time. Expression and punctuation errors become more apparent when reading aloud. Calling telephone numbers and typing lengthy URLs into your browser are simple ways of checking these details.

### **Take plenty of time**

Checking is easier when you've stepped away from the job for a while. If possible leave the job for a day or two and come back to it. It's far better to wait and check a proof properly than rush and have to pay for a re-print.

## Proof checklist

- Spelling and grammar, watch out for words the spell check won't catch, such as it's/its, their/there, your/you're, were/where, then/than, and to/too.
- Consistent and correct spelling of specialised words such as product or brand names, and terminology.
- Duplication, check for two identical words or numbers that are next to each other.
- Punctuation, is it correct and consistent throughout?
- Contact details check that contact names, telephone, and fax numbers are correct. Also check email and web addresses.
- Is the document the correct size/shape?
- Logos check it's the correct version, alongside consistency of size and positioning.
- General layout and colour/imagery. If it's a product shot, make sure it's the correct model and most up-to-date shot. Check any final retouching meets with your approval.
- Product codes and reference numbers all correct
- Overall consistency with other materials (other brochures, catalogues or stationary)
- Pagination, are all pages included in the proof, are the pages in the correct order & do page numbers correspond with contents pages and other references within the text. Are they in a consistent position?
- Small print Have you added this where relevant and checked the content to ensure legal compliance?
- Have you marked up and final amends on the proof and signed it?
- Are there any missing characters or broken type?
- Are the colours setup correctly? If your brand uses a particular colour (eg Pantone 231) has this been specified to the designer?
- Are all running headers consistent?
- Do you own full copyright for all images and logos that have been reproduced?
- Is the use of capital letters consistent throughout the document?
- Have you checked that all abbreviations are correct and consistent?
- Does the typeface look correct? If you have a corporate typeface, ensure this has been used consistently and hasn't been substituted with another font.
- Have you checked for widows and orphans? A widow is the last word (or short last line) of a paragraph that falls at the top of a page or column. An orphan is the first line of a paragraph that falls at the bottom of a page or column. Both should be avoided!
- Have you double-checked that all printed documents fit within your work constraints? For example, does a letterhead address fit within the window of your current envelopes and is the paper compatible with your desktop printer?