

Problem	Symptom	Cause	Solution
Back Trap	Ink is pulled from printed surface onto subsequent blankets.	1 Ink setting too quickly 2 Darker Colours printed early in sequence 3 Heavier ink films printed early in sequence 4 Unabsorbed substrate 5 Excessive blanket/impression cylinder pressure 6 Inappropriate blanket	Consult Ink supplier Alter sequence Alter sequence Consult paper supplier Reset Consult blanket manufacturer
Chalking	Ink pigment does not adhere to substrate.	1 Unsuitable ink system 2 Ink penetrating (setting) too quickly 3 Ink drying too slowly 4 Substrate too acidic 5 Fount pH too acidic	Consult ink manufacturer Consult ink manufacturer Consult ink manufacturer Change substrate Adjust fount solution to proper concentration.
Colour Variation	Inconsistent colour reproduction between repeat jobs	1 Substrate variation 2 Different Pantone® books	Consult ink manufacturer Standardise edition & printing of Pantone®
Dot Gain	Halftones appear 'muddy' and lack sharpness	1 Imagesetter output not calibrated to press dot gain 2 Plates incorrectly processed 3 Excessively absorbent substrate 4 Excessive blanket/impression cylinder pressure 5 Slur 6 Ink too thin/weak 7 Ink emulsification	Calibrate Recheck processing Consult paper manufacturer Reset Check press maintenance Consult ink manufacturer Adjust ink/water balance.
Drying	Ink film remains wet.	1 Ink emulsification 2 Excessive filmweight 3 Non absorbent substrate 4 Insufficient air circulation  5 Humidity too high	Adjust ink/water balance. Carry less ink Different ink type may be required. Fan sheets; use appropriate sheet off spare. Use small stacks for foils and plastics. Control humidity.
Ghosting	Solid areas show image of another part of print.	1 Poor job layout 2 Ink filmweight too low 3 Insufficient rolling power on press	Improve job layout Consult ink manufacturer Change job layout
Gloss	Printed surface is too dull	1 Substrate too absorbent 2 Ink emulsification 3 Ink filmweight too low 4 Ink penetrating substrate excessively	Consult paper manufacturer Adjust ink/water balance. Consult ink manufacturer Consult ink manufacturer
Hickies - Bullseye	Eye shaped white spots with coloured centres	1 Dried ink particles 2 Roller breakdown 3 Pressroom contamination	Avoid ink skin Recondition and replace as necessary. Locate source and eliminate
Hickies - Irregular shaped	Irregular shaped white spots with open centres	1 Loose paper dust and coatings	Consult paper manufacturer
Misting	Ink thrown from inker rollers	1 Excessive ink on rollers 2 Ink emulsification 3 Rollers set incorrectly	Adjust ink settings Adjust ink/water balance. Adjust
Mottle	Solids not uniform.	1 Poor substrate surface 2 Printing pressure incorrect 3 Ink emulsification 4 Worn blanket	Consult paper manufacturer Adjust Adjust ink/water balance. Replace
Picking	Paper coating depositing on plates & blankets	1 Excessive damping 2 Excessive paper dust 3 Printing pressure too high 4 Ink too tacky for substrate	Adjust ink/water balance. Consult paper manufacturer Adjust Consult ink manufacturer
Piling	Ink build up on plates	1 Paper debris 2 Ink emulsification 3 Ink contains large particles 4 Cylinders not packed correctly 5 Rollers worn or set incorrectly	Consult paper manufacturer Adjust ink/water balance. Consult ink manufacturer/look for ink skin. Adjust Adjust or replace
Plate wear	Gradual loss of image	1 Plates wearing 2 Plates incorrectly processed 3 Excessive paper debris 4 Incorrect fount solution concentration 5 Cylinders not packed correctly 6 Ink contains large particles	Replace plates Recheck processing Consult paper manufacturer Consult Fount supplier Adjust Consult ink manufacturer
Roller Stripping	Ink not transferring onto rollers	1 Fount pH too acidic 2 Form roller glazed	Adjust fount solution to proper concentration. Deglaze
Scuffing(Rubbing)	Printed surface exhibits poor resistance when abraded	1 Ink emulsification 2 Fount solution pH incorrect 3 Ink not dry 4 Abrasive paper surface 5 Ink lacks rub resistance	Adjust ink/water balance. Consult Fount supplier See Drying above Job requires varnishing Consult ink manufacturer
Scumming	Ink appears in non image areas	1 Fount solution pH incorrect 2 Ink too soft 3 Ink not water resistant enough 4 Plates incorrectly processed 5 Rollers worn or set incorrectly	Consult Fount supplier Consult ink manufacturer Consult ink manufacturer Recheck processing Adjust or replace
Set Off	Ink transfers to back of sheet above	1 Ink not drying quickly enough 2 Insufficient spray powder 3 Stacks too heavy/high	See Drying above Increase Reduce
Tinting	Ink appears on sheet as a background tint	1 Ink bleeding into damp 2 Ink/Water balance incorrect 3 Printing pressure too high 4 Ink not water resistant enough 5 Plates incorrectly processed	Consult Fount supplier Adjust Adjust Consult ink manufacturer Recheck processing