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PMS and Pantones explained.

Pantone |'pɑːntɒn|

noun [usu. as adj.] trademark

a system for matching colors, used in specifying printing inks : *Pantone colors*.

The PMS system uses pre-determined, published colour formulas to create a large number of ink colours. **PMS stands for Pantone Matching System®**, and is a standardised colour reproduction system. Similar to the paint swatch guides you find at your favourite paint shop, the pantone colour chart contains thousands of colour swatches created from a palette of basic colours. Creating a Pantone spot colour is similar to mixing paint such as blue and yellow to get green, but with much more precision. Each colour has a 'PMS' number assigned to it. These numbers are used to identify the exact colour needed. The specified ink is then prepared using the correct mixture of base colours, either purchased pre-mixed or most often mixed on-site at the screenprinters. Using PMS inks is called spot colour printing.

When your colours have to be exact you should always use PMS colours, either on their own or added to standard four-color process printing. Here are a few examples:

1. **Consistent Branding/Logos** - Think McDonald's red or UPS brown. Using PMS colours for your logo/image will allow you to ensure colour accuracy and establish a standard that anyone working with your artwork will be able to match.
2. **Colours outside the range of CMYK** - There are some colours that just can't be produced with CMYK, including colours such as navy blue or bright orange.
3. **Smooth coverage of large areas** - A PMS colour always works well when the consistency and saturation of large areas of a solid ink colour is important.

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