

# A glossary of useful media terms



# Glossary

ABC	Audit Bureau of Circulations; a group that audits newspaper circulation figures
Actuality, shorted to Act	Audio material recorded on location. In news programmes it is usually someone speaking and lasts for 10 to 20 seconds. People outside radio often call it a sound bite. In features and magazine programmes however, the word actuality is often taken to mean recorded material that isn't speech. In TV it is called sync.
Advertorial	Paid for feature in a newspaper or magazine – a form of advertising
Agenda	What lies behind and dictates the editorial decisions the media make
Angle	The element of the story the journalist decides is most important and focuses their report on. Sometimes referred to as the peg.
BARB	Broadcasting Audience Research Board, measures TV audience numbers
Blog	An online commentary or diary often written by individuals about hobbies or areas of specialist interest. Blogs commonly allow comments below entries and are published in reverse chronological order. Also known as a weblog. Someone who writes a blog is called a blogger. Blogosphere/Blogdom/Blogiverse/Blogmos/Blogostan - All things relating to blogs and blog communities.
Briefing	An opportunity to give a journalist background information on a subject, usually on something which is a current issue
Broadsheet	Traditionally a newspaper with a larger format page aimed at a more high brow readership such as <i>The Telegraph</i> , <i>Guardian</i> and <i>Financial Times</i> . Recent changes to papers, such as <i>the Independent</i> and <i>Times</i> which have gone tabloid in size but retain the same editorial values, have blurred this definition
Bump	To move the position or timing of a story.
Byline	A line that indicates who wrote a story. For example by Martin Bayfield, Rugby union correspondent.
Caption	A brief description or explanation what a picture in a newspaper or magazine is. In TV it is also used for a still image with text. It could be a way of illustrating someone being interviewed on the phone (with a picture of where they are, or what the story is about, plus some text giving their name). It could be a still picture or photo illustrating the story.
Chroma-key	A process which allows you to film a presenter in front of a blank screen and add in different pictures behind, making it look as though they are somewhere else. It is sometimes called greenscreen or bluescreen. In the BBC it is often called Colour Separation Overlay (CSO )

Colour separation	A stage in the print process for colour pictures. Be wary of magazines who say they will only run your story if you pay a "colour separation fee" – this is to all intents and purposes a scam
Consumer press	Publications which can be readily bought on the high street and are aimed at non specialist audiences
Copy	The words making up the text of an article
Copy approval	A source or interviewer asking to see the text of an article prior to publication. (Always discouraged!)
Correspondent	A journalist who is an expert in a particular subject who reports on that kind of news e.g. a cricket correspondent, arts correspondent or Middle East correspondent.
Cover story	Leading story used on front cover
Cut	To remove text (or even a whole story)
Deadline	The time a piece of work has to be done by. Deadlines are sacrosanct, there is no room for manoeuvre in the media and they rule journalist's lives
Cross head	A few words used to break up large amounts of text, normally taken from the main text. Typically used in interviews.
Cub	A trainee reporter. Also known as a rookie or junior reporter.
Donut	An interview on location in which the presenter in the studio hands over to the presenter on location. They describe the situation and interview a guest before handing back to the presenter in the studio.
Down the line	A broadcast interview done from another studio separate to the one where the interviewer is sitting. Also used to refer to interviews given over the phone
Editor	The person in charge of the content of a newspaper, magazine or TV programme
Editorial	Comment on a story by the Editor
Embargo	A request to the media to only use a story after a particular time and date
Events diary	A listing of forthcoming news opportunities kept by the media. The BBC's forward planning diary is a really good way of flagging up stories to local radio stations all over the country.
E-zine	A web based magazine
Feature	A longer more in-depth article in print or on radio which is less time dependent than news
Feature editor	Manages the production of features

Freelancer	A journalist who is self-employed and seeks out stories to take to newspapers, magazines radio and TV
File	To send a report back from a location or finally submit copy. Once a journalist has filed their story the die really is cast, and there can be little room for turning back or changing the story.
Hook	The bit of the story which will catch the imagination of the journalist and get them wanting to cover the story
ISDN line	Integrated services digital network – basically a high quality phone line capable of carrying high quality speech for radio or data.
Juxtaposition	The relationship between articles and/or pictures on a page, or broadcast items, deliberately chosen by the editor
Masthead	The block at the top of the front page of a newspaper carrying the title
Media group	The owners of a group of titles
Multi media	Term used to describe a range of different delivery formats such as video, audio, text and images, often presented simultaneously on the internet.
News agency	A business set up to collect and sell stories to the media
News agency wires	The latest news stories written by journalists from different news agencies around the world and fed into a computer system. Media organisations, like the BBC, pay for their journalists to be able to access these stories on their computers.
News desk	The office where news stories are worked on before publication
News editor	The person in charge of the news desk. They make many of the day-to-day decisions about which stories will run and which won't. They manage all of the reporters
News release	A stylised letter sent to the media with the intention of attracting interest in a story
News values	The underlying factors which help a journalist to spot stories and decide what will be news worthy
NIBs	News in brief – the small brief boxed columns of stories which appear in newspapers
OB	Outside Broadcast

Off the record	A conversation with a journalist, usually to give background information, which you do not wish to see published or broadcast. Best avoided unless you really know the journalist and trust them implicitly
PA	The Press Association – a national news agency
Package	A pre-recorded item for radio or TV
Page lead	The main story on a page
Photo-story	A news story centred on a photograph. This can even be a photo with an extended caption
Picture opportunity	An event or individual that can be offered to newspapers as a subject for their photographers
Pitch	Story idea sent to an editor by a reporter.
Press conference	A formalised presentation and question and answer session with journalists
Press release	See "news release"
Put to bed	Used when the article has gone to print. Once it has been put to bed nothing can be changed
Red top	Tabloid newspapers like <i>The Sun</i> , <i>Daily Sport</i> and <i>Mirror</i> – so called because of their red mastheads
Remote studio	The BBC has small user-operated studios all over the country in town halls, police headquarters etc. They are linked by ISDN lines to the main BBC network and can be used to ensure broadcast quality interviews from areas away from its main studios
Running Time	A report or programme is "running to time" if it's on target to finish at a certain time. A programme can only be a certain length, because there other programmes come before and before and after it in the schedule. The producer has to make sure their programme doesn't overrun.
Rushes	The original video footage filmed by a camera crew that requires editing.
Scoop	An exclusive story that no-one else has reported.
Snapper	Newspaper slang for a photographer
Stet	Proofreader's mark for 'restore to condition before mark up'.
Stringer	Journalists, often freelancers under retainer, who contribute stories to newspapers from areas where they don't employ regular staff

Stock footage	Shots of common events used to help tell a story e.g. a crowd turning up for a football match. News organisations, like the BBC, often have a library of useful footage that can be used, hence it is often called library material.
Story board	Chronological set of scenes mapping out a programme for TV
Sub-editor	Person who checks and edits all copy before it goes into print, designs the page layout and writes the headlines. The Sub-editors or "Subs" have a great deal of responsibility for what actually ends up on the page, particularly on newspapers
Supplement	An additional section to a newspaper or magazine, usually with a specific theme or topic
Spiked	What happens to a news release (or other material) which is not used - comes from the days when journalists desk had a wooden block with a spike on it on which unwanted paper was impaled
Tabloid	A smaller newspaper format where the pages are approximately 30x40cm – used by the <i>Sun</i> , <i>Mirror</i> etc. and more recently <i>The Independent</i> and <i>The Times</i>
Target audience	The people at which a publication or programme is aimed at
Vox Pop	A type of short interview where members of the public are stopped at random and asked a question. It helps the audience gauge opinion on a particular subject. Vox pop is short for vox populi, a Latin phrase which means "voice of the people".
Video Tape – shortened to VT	Before digital technology, video tape was widely used for recording moving pictures. The term VT is still used to refer to all video, whether it's on tape or digital.