

File Preparation Guide

ACCEPTED FILE FORMATS

- Adobe Illustrator CS4 .eps, .ai, .pdf
- Adobe Photoshop CS4 .psd (layered), .tif (flattened), .jpg, .pdf
- Adobe InDesign CS4 .indd, .pdf
- Adobe PDF
- QuarkXPress 6.x .qxd, .pdf

IMPORTANT:

- **PUBLISHER** files are not accepted. Save as a **PDF**.
- **Most Microsoft files are not usable for graphic output.**
- Photoshop is **NOT** a page layout program. Use it to **ONLY** edit your photos or raster files, then place them in Illustrator or desktop publishing programs like Adobe InDesign or Quark XPress.
- **SAVE AS EPS...** Saving a Photoshop file or a similar painting software file as an **.eps**, does **NOT** make it a true vector **.eps** file. Examples of painting programs are Windows Paint Shop, Corel Photo Paint, and Paint Shop Pro.

Vector VS. Raster

Vector Art - Can be increased to any size.

Illustrator, InDesign, Quark XPress
.eps, .ai, .pdf, .indd, .qxd



Raster Art - Increasing size is limited.

Photoshop and similar painting programs
.psd, .tif, .jpg



FONTS & SUPPORTING FILES

Fonts are the biggest cause of prepress and production problems. Follow these guidelines to minimize font problems with your job.

- For files created in Illustrator (.eps and .ai) and InDesign please **OUTLINE ALL FONTS** before saving file.
- For InDesign and Quark, please include any fonts, placed images and logos used with your files.
- **Missing files or fonts can delay the production of your job.**

COLOR MANAGEMENT

Our software is designed to accurately reproduce MOST pantone colors. Make sure any pantones used ARE NOT converted to CMYK. It is important to understand that NOT ALL Pantone colors can be accurately reproduced in process color printing.

NOTE: We highly recommend that all disks supplied be accompanied by a calibrated (approved) proof, made from the file, to be used for color matching. If callibrated proof is not supplied, AmeriSign & Graphics will not be responsible for the final color output.

- Convert all graphic files to CMYK. RGB files will not print properly and will not be accepted.
- Name spot colors consistently within all files referenced by your job.
- Delete any unused colors from the color list.
- Select "Process Separation" in the Edit Color menu for any custom or PMS colors that convert to a process build.
- Include marks to indicate folds or perforations.
- Open the output document(s) from the media (CD, DVD, etc...) you're sending and make sure that all placed elements retained their links to the referenced files.

IMPORTANT: Viewing a project on your computer screen **WILL NOT** indicate what it will look like when printed. Fonts **MUST** be included with **EVERY** job, or converted to outlines.

RGB - What you see on the monitor



CMYK - What actually prints out



Note: This visual only works when viewed on a computer screen, not on printed paper.

Solid Black (4 color black) - For best results in printing solid black, please use a 4-color black in all of your programs. Use these settings: K=100% CMY=65%

Transparancies & Shadows - When using shadows, glows or any other transparency (image or otherwise) on top of a spot color, **ALWAYS** convert your spot color to CMYK and flatten before sending.

SCALE & RESOLUTION

Choosing the proper scale will insure manageable file size and highest quality output. All artwork should be saved at 300 dots per inch (DPI) at the final output size. Common scales are 5%, 10% and 25%.

If your file is not 300 DPI, you can not simply increase a low resolution image to a higher one by increasing the DPI in your imaging program. The printed result will be a blurry image.

A file in 72 DPI



Bad File

A file in 72 DPI scaled to 300 DPI



Bad File

A file in 300 DPI



Good File

BLEED & TRIM


Bleeds are required in all artwork with an image extending to one of the borders. Add a quarter inch (0.125") to each side to allow for cutting. For example, for a 4" x 6" postcard with full bleed, the image size should be submitted at 4.25" x 6.25" (red box).

0.125" (1/8") on each edge of the card will be trimmed off during the cutting process. This will leave you a 4" x 6" standard post card (black box).

Your type (text) should be 0.125" (1/8") inside the cut box on each side. This will guarantee your text will not be cut off from your artwork (blue box).

When sending a file, make sure you include crop marks so we can cut the job correctly.



Preparing files for print or other forms of output can be tricky and can cause costly delays and incur additional costs due to improper file preparation. Most of these problems can be avoided easily by following these suggestions. If you still have any questions, please do not hesitate to call us. 

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