

File Setup Guide

Preparing Your Files for Digital Printing

Thanks you for choosing Presentech Digital Printing for your color print project. We look forward to working with you.

Please review the following guidelines to ensure that you are correctly preparing your files. Need additional information? We welcome your call or email to clarify any of the guidelines below.

SUPPORT FILES

Include all image and graphic files imported into your document.

Please supply original and editable copies of all graphic files. Graphics that are missing may remain visible on your page but may output in low resolution and look pixelated. Sending a print ready pdf file is also a great option for digital printing as you won't have to worry about sending your graphics or fonts with your print file.

Never copy and use images that you found on a web page. Web images may look great on the screen, but will not print like they appear. It is better to leave off a logo or photo altogether rather than copy one from a web page.

If you are ordering a large format poster or banner, be sure to use a high resolution graphic that will not lose quality when enlarged. Better yet, use a vector graphic that is designed for printing at any size. Remember, if it looks bad small, it will look worse when printed large.

COLOR FORMAT

Convert all your colors from RGB to CMYK

Your images may print off color or with inaccurate color if you neglect to convert images. Since your monitor is RGB, RGB images look great on screen, but they will look washed out and off color when printed on a CMYK printer or plotter.

Solid or spot colors should be chosen from a Pantone (PMS) coated list.

The Pantone Matching System (PMS) is designed to provide us with a color that Some Pantone colors are outside of the CMYK color space and appear different when printed as process color. We suggest referring to a current Pantone color to review your color. Never rely on your screen image for color.

A note about color accuracy

Our presses are calibrated to produce the most accurate color possible. Please do not use your own printer or monitor as a guide to color accuracy. Since we print using CMYK inks, spot colors may print differently than their PMS equivalent. If you are concerned about color accuracy, always allow enough time to request a proof before printing your order.

FILE FORMAT AND IMAGE RESOLUTION

Save your images as tif or eps

Avoid jpeg files, as this format is designed for low res graphics used on the web, not for high quality printing.

Always save your images at the right resolution

Never “up res” your image as this may cause undesired softness or blurring.

For small format printing, your image should be saved at 150 dpi.

A higher dpi will not increase your print quality.

For large format printing, your image should be saved at 125 dpi at the final size.

Examples: If your document is designed at actual size, your scans should be 100dpi.

If your document is being enlarged 200%, your scans should be 200 dpi, etc.

CHOOSING THE BEST PROGRAM TO USE FOR YOUR PROJECT

Base your decision on what you are ultimately printing

There are many software programs available to choose from, and many clients tell us they have no idea which program to choose when designing a file for digital printing. While some programs, such as Quark Xpress or InDesign work well for most projects, others, like Microsoft Word, seldom produce quality results. When asked how they chose a particular program to design their files, the most common responses are “It’s all I had” and “I just picked it at random.” Choosing the right software can be a crucial choice that affects the quality of your output.’

Choose a program that is designed for high-res printing

Some programs, such as Word, print letter or legal page sizes, but not much else. Printing small cards, for instance, may require a special page size. Likewise, your program should offer the option to create crop marks, which are used for trimming and page alignment. If your software choice is missing these features, your order could be printed incorrectly or incur additional setup charges.

Additionally, programs as Word and PowerPoint print in RGB color space. Since we print in CMYK, this can cause a shift in color. Blues will print purple and reds will print orange. If you must use an MS Office program, adjust your colors accordingly.

We suggest using Photoshop or a photo imaging program for working with scans and images, and Illustrator for working with illustrations. Then, import or place your graphics into a page layout program like InDesign or Quark Xpress.

Designing with Photoshop or Illustrator for a multiple page project

These programs create single page files only, and our digital presses are designed to print all pages in a file simultaneously. Sending separate files will delay your order and increase your cost. Instead, using a page layout program will allow you to create one multiple page file that is more efficiently processed by our high speed rips.

You may create single page files in Photoshop or Illustrator and then save them as high res pdf files. You can then combine them into a single pdf file and achieve the efficiencies of sending a single print file.

FONTS

Supply the necessary fonts for your job or convert the fonts in your graphic to outlines

This function is available in programs such as Illustrator and InDesign.

If you are using postscript fonts, please be certain to provide both printer and screen fonts. If printer fonts are missing we will not be able to create a proof or plates for your job. Be careful about using low quality fonts you found for free on the internet. Many times these fonts are fine for web pages but will not print correctly on a high res printer or press.

DOCUMENT BLEEDS

Include and set up your document bleeds correctly

Make sure all bleeds extend at least an eighth of an inch beyond the edge of the finished document.

Without bleed included, we will need to trim into your document's live area to eliminate a white edge.

IMPOSITION

Send a one up file and we will correct the layout to best fit the press sheet.

You don't have to worry about sending a multiple up file. Just send a single file and our press will automatically fit the press sheet. Example: You have a business card to print. Just send us a single card and we will impose it to print 16 per press sheet to save you money.

TWO SIDED OR BOOKLET PRINTING

Send a 2 page file (page 2 is side 2)

When you would like us to print your order two sided, please send a 2 page file. Our presses automatically print the back side simultaneously with the front side. For a booklet, send all of the pages in one print file. It is fine to send the file as reader spreads (page 1,2,3 etc) and we will reorder the pages for the correct booklet order for you.

PROOFS

Why take a chance? Always send us a mock-up as a guide for printing.

A PDF submitted with your print file is suggested so we can proof your output against your pdf proof. If you aren't able to send a pdf with your file, a faxed or printed proof will also work fine

Following the above checklist helps reduce potential problems, accelerates job delivery and avoids additional fees associated with pre-press problems.

Confused? Overwhelmed? Have more questions?

Just give us a call, and we'll help walk you through the process.

