

Large Format Color Printing

Creating your file

Poster and board sizes

Our maximum printable area for large format graphics is:

Rolled Posters:	60" x any length, or 59" x any length with bleed.
Vinyl Banners:	98" x any length, or 96" x any length with bleed.
Direct to Board:	48" x 96" standard, 60" x 120" on select boards
Lamination:	60" x any length

Please note that not all media and mounting boards are available in the maximum sizes shown.

Support files

Save your file as a press ready pdf for printing

We suggest sending a press ready pdf to print your order. Be sure to include crop marks and the required bleed. This avoids the need to send fonts and support files. If sending a native file, please include all image and graphic files. See page 4.

Never use images that you found on a web page.

Web images may look great on the screen, but will not print as they appear since they are typically only 72 dpi. It is better to leave off a logo or photo altogether rather than paste one from a web page.

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

Be sure to use a high resolution graphic that will not lose quality when printed. Opening a graphic into Photoshop and increasing the size or dpi will typically result in a poor quality image when printed. Better yet, use a vector graphic that is designed for high quality print. Just because it looks OK on the screen has no relationship to how it will look when printed.

Color format

Convert all your photos from RGB to CMYK

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

Solid or spot colors should be Pantone (PMS) coated or convert to CMYK. We suggest referring to a current Pantone swatch book to accurately choose and confirm your color. Never rely on your screen image.

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. If you are concerned about color accuracy, request and allow enough time to order a printed proof

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Resolution and DPI

RESOLUTION AND DPI

For best quality, we need 100 dpi at your final size.

Here's how to figure this out for your file:

If your image is being printed at the **same size** of your finished poster, your photos should be 100 dpi.
Example: File size = 24 x 36 and the poster size is 24 x 36. Use 100 dpi.

If your image designed at **half of the size** of your finished poster, save your photos at 200 dpi.
Example: File size = 12 x 18 and the poster size is 24 x 36. 200 dpi after a 2X enlargement ends up with 100 dpi at the final size.

- Never import a photo and enlarge it in your page layout program. Make these changes before importing it.
- You may review your print file at 100% on the screen for an idea of how it will print.

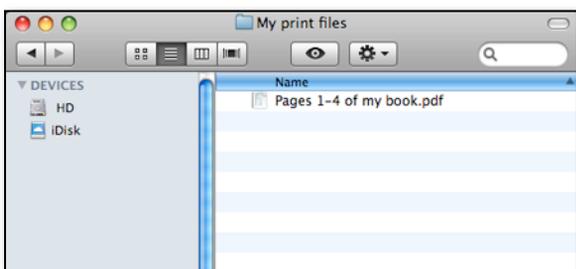
You can skip this step if your images are all Vector (an Illustrator image, for instance.) Vector graphics can typically be enlarged to any size without a loss of resolution. But, if your images are photos and other raster images, you must follow the above rules.

When possible, send one print file with multiple pages, not multiple files.

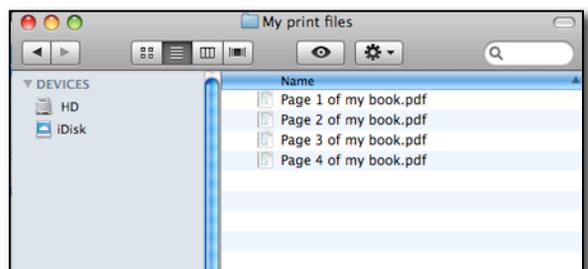
We are able to process and print all pages in your project simultaneously so sending each page as a separate file adds time and cost. If you are printing multiple pages, when possible, please create one multiple page file, not separate files.

The exception is when sending very large files. In these cases, sending us separate files may make sense to keep the file sizes down to a reasonable size.

As shown in the screen shot, if printing 4 posters, your print file should be sent to us as one 4=page file.



CORRECT: All pages are in one pdf file



INCORRECT: Each page is a separate pdf file

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Adding bleed

One of the problems we see most often is that documents are created without bleed. Bleed is very important and should be considered from the beginning stages of your design process.

What is “bleed” and why is this important?

When your image extends all the way to the edge of the printed page, you should add “bleed.” By extending the image past the crop mark, you ensure that minor variations in trimming don't produce an unsightly white line along the edge of the artwork (see the sample below).

Page-layout programs, such as Adobe InDesign, and illustration programs, like Adobe Illustrator, can easily handle “bleeds” and automatically place crop marks. In Adobe Photoshop, you can use Print with Preview's crop marks and bleed options, or you can create the crop marks manually.

Below is an example of two sheets after trimming (we placed them on a black background to make the edges easier to see.) The sheet on the left was designed with bleed while the sheet on the right was designed without bleed. As a result, this left a thin white line to appear along the edge of the card after trimming.

If your file is sent without bleed, our only option is to enlarge your file 101% and trim into the image.



This document included bleed and is properly trimmed.



This document was created without bleed and as a result, a thin white line is left after printing.

Setting up your file with bleed

When designing your document, any image or background color which touches the edge of the page must extend an additional 1/8” past the page edge. Equally important, if sending us a press ready PDF file to print, the pdf must also show the 1/8” bleed. Often a pdf will not include your bleed even if you properly added it to your document. Be sure to open and check your print ready pdf before uploading your file.

Large Format Color Printing

Saving a PDF file with crops and bleed

Saving a pdf file with crops and bleed: may be different depending on the software version you are using.

From an InDesign file

Your instructions may vary slightly depending on the platform and version of InDesign that you are using.

Open your document. Ensure you have added 1/8" bleed on all sides as needed. Under FILE, select EXPORT

Name your file and press SAVE

In the next screen, make these choices:

General:

Adobe PDF Preset, select: Press Quality

Enter the pages you would like. If all pages, no change is needed.

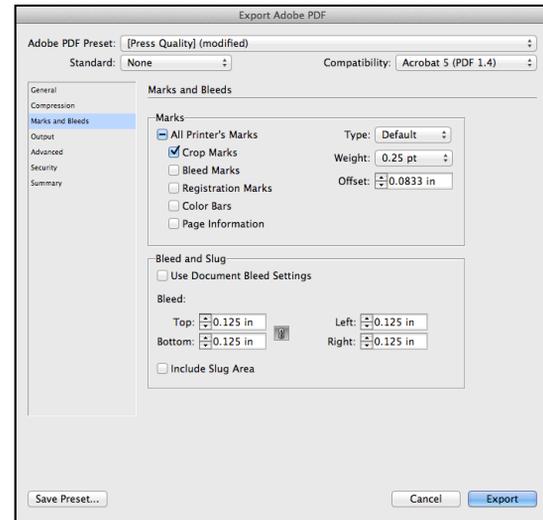
Marks and bleed:

Under MARKS, check: Crop Marks. Uncheck all other marks

Under BLEED AND SLUG, uncheck: Use Document Bleed Settings

Under BLEED, enter 0.125 for left, right, top and bottom

Click **EXPORT**



From an Illustrator file

Your instructions may vary slightly depending on the platform and version of Illustrator that you are using.

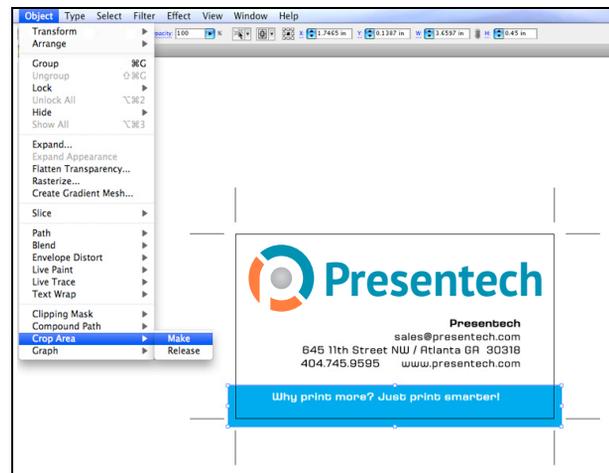
Create your document. Your page size should be the exact size of the item you are printing after it is trimmed.

Ensure you have added 1/8" bleed on all sides as needed.

Under FILE, select DOCUMENT SETUP

Select CREATE TRIM MARKS or CROP AREA, MAKE
Crop marks will be added to your document.

Select SAVE AS and choose ADOBE PDF.



Presentech Advanced Print Solutions
www.presentech.com sales@presentech.com
404 745-9595