



WEB GRAPHICS

General Guidelines to Creating Printably Correct Files

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Introduction

Last minute problems and confusion can result in a great deal of frustration and additional cost. We have put together some tips and guidelines that we hope will help you prepare and submit error free files that can be processed quickly and efficiently.

Remember, if you have any questions on page size, image area, colors or any other aspect of your job, call your Tristar Web Graphics Client Services Representative for the answers. We are here to help you.



Planning

It is important to plan all of your work. Know what the product is that you are producing. Ask yourself these important questions.

1. What is the final trim size of the ad I am producing?
2. What type of paper is my ad going to be printed on?
3. What colors do I want to print on each flat of my job?
4. What is the image area of your pages?
5. When does the job have to be delivered?
6. Do I need to allow additional time for special bindery or mail house production?
7. Do I need to create bleeds for any of the pages?
8. What is the deadline for my internal first proof and second proof?
9. When does Tristar need the files?
10. Does Tristar need to create a final proof for us to see?
11. When does the final proof from Tristar need to be here for us to proofread?
12. When do I need to approve and/or send back the final proof to Tristar?

When setting up the time-frame for your workflow, begin with the date Tristar will need your files and work backwards. Allow plenty of time for internal proofing, printing lasers and building your files. Determine deadlines for the submission of the art and copy.

Folder and File Naming

Deciding on a File Naming Convention can be difficult. Here are some helpful hints...

Macintosh computers can only see 31 characters. If you use extensions (.eps, .tif, .jpg, etc), they count as part of the 31 characters.

Use upper and lower case, never use all capital letters.

The file name must be unique to any other file and be as descriptive as possible.

The file name should not contain any spaces or special characters. Underscore (_) is the only special character that is acceptable.

Master folder should have job name and date.

Examples: MyJobAug26
MyJobFall2004

Inside the Master folder should be a folder for fonts.

The naming convention for documents may vary depending on versioning. If you have only one document and one version the name should be the same as the master folder. Creating a naming convention for version intensive job can be difficult.

Examples: 0819HouBaseA2n3CMYK
(August 19 Ad for Houston Division Base Pages 2&3 4-color)

0819HouEmmottsA2n3K
(August 19 Ad for Houston Division of Emmotts Version that follows Base A for Pages 2&3 with a black change-out)

0819DalTreesC1MY
(August 19 Ad for Dallas Division of Trees Version that follows Base C for Page 1 with a Magenta and Yellow change-out)

We suggest that the file name appear at the bottom of the printed page. If you provide runsheets, make sure naming of versions is consistent with the documents.

Illustrator Files

It is always best to start your production with the art files.

Illustrator 10 is the most widely used vector based (point to point) art application; however, FreeHand is also commonly used. Illustrator will be used in this guideline for reference. Most of the points are relevant to FreeHand as well.

If text is used in your artwork, make sure that the text is converted to outlines. This will ensure that there are no missing fonts in the eps's that the page layout program cannot collect.

Make sure that all the colors used are converted to process (CMYK) colors if you are printing a process color job. Make sure that black is black only and not a mixture of all colors. Many vendor provided artwork, i.e. logos, etc, are created using Pantone colors. These files must be opened and checked. Convert the colors to process colors if necessary.

If you are going to print a spot color, such as a Pantone color, make sure that the color you select is the same color you create in your page layout document. When this artwork is placed into a page layout document, the spot color shows up in the colors palette. This will be the spot color you need to apply to text, border, etc. in your page layout program.

When the artwork file(s) are completed, use the arrow tool and select all. If possible, change the typeface in the character palette to Helvetica or Times. These are common fonts that all printers use. Selecting one of these fonts will alleviate the false missing font errors printers experience during output.

While you have everything selected, go to the **Transparencies** palette and make sure that the threshold is on 100%. Illustrator 10 has the capability of being not only vector based but vector/raster based. Making sure the transparencies threshold is set to 100% ensures that the files are 100% vector. This will not affect any gradations or vignettes.

Now you are ready to save your file(s). Always use **Save As** (under **File** menu) to save your file(s). Make sure that you are saving your file to the correct destination. The file name must be unique to any other file and that it contains no spaces or special characters. Make sure the format is Illustrator EPS. Hit the **Save** button. Another screen will appear. Make sure **Compatibility** is Version 10, the **Preview** is Macintosh (8-bit color), deselect everything under **Options** and that **PostScript®** is set for Level 3. Hit the **OK** button.

Photoshop Files

Photoshop is the most widely used image application. This application is raster based (uses pixels).

The resolution (pixels per inch) should always be at least 2 times the line screening without enlarging the image in the page layout program. Remember you cannot add resolution to an existing file. We recommend 200 dpi or higher.

When using black and white images, the mode should always be set for grayscale.

Color images used for printing are always 4-color process and the mode should always be set for CMYK. Should you choose to use a Pantone or RGB color in your color picker or in duo- or tri-tones, the RGB colors will not print, and Pantone colors are converted to process.

It is best to color correct your images in CMYK mode and not in RGB mode. This is a controversial subject with many Photoshop users. It is acceptable to color correct in RGB mode; however, when you convert to CMYK mode you will notice the colors have gotten muddy and you will have to color correct again.

When making clipping paths, make sure the flatness is set for 2 or 3.

After artwork is finished, the image must be flattened.

Save your files in Photoshop EPS format, being careful not to include any special characters in the file name. Make sure preview is set for Macintosh (8 bits/pixel) and the encoding is Binary.

Never use any compression, such as JPEG, LZW, etc.



Fonts

All fonts must be PostScript fonts (usually called "Type 1" fonts) and must be licensed to the client. Fonts used other than PostScript Fonts should be sent to Tristar in advance to test.

Fonts should not be stylized in the page layout program; use the font containing the desired attribute. In the event that the desired font is not available, a different font must be chosen.

All fonts used must be supplied in a separate folder labeled "Fonts". Both screen and printer fonts must be supplied.

Page Building

Begin by creating a new document in your layout program. Make the page size the final trim size of your job. Use guides to indicate the image area. Make sure that the pages in your document are not side-by-side unless making a double-truck. Next, go to **Edit Colors** and delete Red, Green and Blue to start with a fresh color palate.

Build double-trucks (crossover spreads) as true spreads in your page layout application. Do not build spreads on a single page that has been made to be as wide as the final spread - pages built this way cannot be split apart for imposition.

Live image area (except for bleeds) must be centered within the document as you intend your page to appear after final trim. The image cutoff on tabloid pages is usually 9.75" wide, however, if you need additional image, you may elect to use up to 10" image area. This additional image area must be built into the gutter of each page. The image cutoff on standard pages is always 20.5" high. Signature cutoffs vary. Please call your Tristar Client Services Representative for image area.

All bleeds must be extended at least 1/4 inch beyond the document's edge.

Color images must be specified as CMYK, not RGB. We utilize the Nexus WorkFlow front end to convert RGB to CMYK on the fly. However, the percentages of CMYK applied may not be the colors you are looking for. For best performance, the conversion to CMYK should be done before the job is submitted.

For 4-color process printing, all color elements must be specified as CMYK values. You should double-check your color usage to make sure that you have no extra color separations beyond the four process colors.

Best results will be achieved if images are rotated, flopped, or skewed in an image manipulation program such as Photoshop, instead of your page layout program.

Blends should not be created in your page layout program. Blends can be created in Adobe Illustrator and then imported to your page. Remember, if your blend needs to be rotated you should apply the rotation in Adobe Illustrator.

If you are running spot colors, place your Illustrator or FreeHand art into the page layout program first. This will update the color palette to include the spot color. This spot color should be used for any area that requires this color. This will alleviate having 4 to 5 different spot colors that are supposed to be the same. If you end up with more than one spot color, the correct color was not selected for at least one piece of art. Note that Pantone CV, Pantone CVC, etc are different colors. Select one and use that color for all areas that get that color.

Page Building (continued)

If you use page numbers or tag lines that need to print, you must make sure they are inside the image area.

Never enlarge Photoshop images or raster art more than 110% and never reduce art to less than 10%. When rotating art in the page building program, either rotate the art box or rotate the art inside the box. Never rotate both the art box and the art inside the box.

Make sure that all trapping is set on default in the **Trap Information** palette.

Run **Spell Checking** on the whole document to correct obvious misspellings.

Save your job often, especially after difficult tasks are completed. You do not want to lose the work you did due to a power outage. Make sure that you are saving your file to the correct destination.

When the job is complete, print out a laser copy and proof the job. If you want to check colors on all pages, print to a black and white laserwriter and select all marks, tag lines and separations.

Some applications will allow you to **Collect for Output** your job and all the support art that Tristar will need. Fonts are not collected. These must be manually collected and put into a font folder. Both printer and screen fonts must be sent to Tristar. If the page layout program does not have a collect for output, you must manually collect all the support art and the files to be sent to Tristar.

Send files and final laser proofs to Tristar.

Creating PDF's

To create good, viable, printable PDF's, you must have a full version of Acrobat (includes the Distiller) and the AdobePS driver.

Select the AdobePS driver in the Chooser. You do not need to select a printer.

Open the page layout document(s) you have created.

Using QuarkXPress as the example (other page layout applications have the settings in different windows), go to the **Print** window. Under the **Document** tab, make sure Separations, Include Blank Pages, Thumbnails and Back to Front are all deselected. Spreads should also be deselected unless you are creating a double-truck PDF. Sequence should be set for All. Registration and Tiling should be turned off. Bleed should be blank unless, of course, you have bleed. If you do have bleed, type in the bleed amount for your job (1/4 inch).

Under the **Setup** tab, the Printer Description should be set for Acrobat Distiller. Paper Size should be set for Custom. Paper Width should be the exact width of your document. Paper Height should be the exact height of your document. Note: if you have a bleed you must add the bleed amount for each side of the page to the Paper Width and Paper Height measurements. Example: You have a 10" wide x 20" high document with a 1/4" bleed all the way around...the Paper Width will be 10.5" and the Paper Height will be 20.5". For Double-Trucks, the Paper Width should be the size of both pages together. Reduce or Enlarge should be set on 100%. Page Positions should be set on Center. Paper Offset and Page Gap should be set on 0". Fit in Print Area should be deselected. Orientation should be set for Portrait.

Under the **Output** tab, Print Colors should be set on Composite CMYK. Halftoning should be set on Conventional. Resolution should be set for 1200 (dpi). Frequency should be set on 100 (lpi). Make sure that Process Cyan, Process Magenta, Process Yellow and Process Black are the only colors showing in the window and that all of them are selected with a check mark.

Under the **Options** tab, Quark PostScript Error handler and Negative Print are deselected. Page Flip should be set on None. In the Pictures area, Output should be set on Normal. Data should be set on Binary. OPI should be set on Include Images. Overprint EPS Black should be deselected. Full Resolution TIFF Output should be selected.

In the **Preview** tab, double check all settings.

Creating PDF's (continued)

Under **Copies**, at the top of the window select 1, and under **Pages**, select the page number(s) you want to make a PDF of.

Under the **Page Setup...** button, go to **Page Attributes** and select **PostScript™ Options** and make sure all are deselected. Hit OK.

Under the **Printer...** button, under the **PDF Settings**, **Job Options** should be set for Press and **After PDF Creation** Launch Adobe Acrobat should be selected.

Go to the **PDF Settings** button and select **PostScript Settings**. **Format PostScript Job** should be set on Level 3 Compatible. **Data Format** should be set on Binary. **Font Inclusion** should be set for All.

Go to the **PostScript Settings** button and select Background Printing. **Print In** should be set to Foreground (no spool file).

Go to the **Background Printing** button and select **Printer Specific Options**. **Resolution** should be set on 1200 dpi.

After all these settings are done hit **Save Settings** button. Then hit the **Save** button and select where you want the PDF file to be saved. Name the file. If you are creating single page PDF's (this is preferred) make sure the page number is in the name. Use Windows compliant naming convention (no spaces and no special characters - "_" underscore is alright to use). Hit **Save** button. This will take you back to the main Print window. Hit the **Print** button.

When the PDF is completed, Adobe Acrobat will open the PDF that you created. Look over the PDF in Acrobat and verify everything is as it should be. Print a laser proof of all the PDF pages and check.



Proofing

Proofing is one of the most important steps in creating good files.

The first proofing step should be to run a spell checking utility in the page layout application in which you have built your job.

The second step is to output lasers of the product produced. Have all pertinent personnel proofread the lasers, marking the changes that need to be made. Correct the documents accordingly. Repeat until no more corrections are necessary.

When the job is approved with no more corrections, a final laser proof should be made of the job and sent to Tristar with the files. If you are sending the files electronically, the final laser proofs should be faxed to Tristar.

Tristar will use these proofs to check the job during production. Tristar can provide proofs of the ripped and trapped files for your approval. These proofs can be in many forms. Tristar can send a PDF soft proof that can be viewed in Acrobat or Acrobat Reader. We can also send black and white laser proofs and/or color plotter proofs. If requested, Tristar can also produce bluelines and color keys.

If you do need to see proofs from Tristar, please allow additional time in your workflow to accommodate the proofing cycle.



File Transfer

REMOVABLE MEDIA

It is very important to check the removable media before loading files. Use a disk utility to check media for corruption. Tristar supports Macintosh formatted 100 mb and 200 mb Zip; 1 gb and 2 gb Jaz; and CD-ROM media. Provide a printout of the contents of each disk. Highlight all files to be output on the printout.

ELECTRONICALLY SUBMITTED FILES

FTP - Tristar Web Graphics operates and administers 2 internal FTP servers. Please call Tristar to set up a personal private password-protected FTP account, or for log-on information to the generic account.

Email - Tristar will accept files through email. Files should not exceed 5 mb. Please call Tristar Web Graphics for email address to which the files should be directed.

All electronically submitted files must be compressed using "Stuffit" utility. All electronically submitted files must be preceded by a phone call notifying Tristar of the transfer.

CAMERA READY SUPPLIED PAGES

Tristar can shoot film of your camera ready supplied film or art boards. Please notify your Tristar Client Services Representative in advance when you have camera ready materials.

No matter how your work is submitted, please send only the files required to complete the job. Extra files can cause confusion and potential errors.